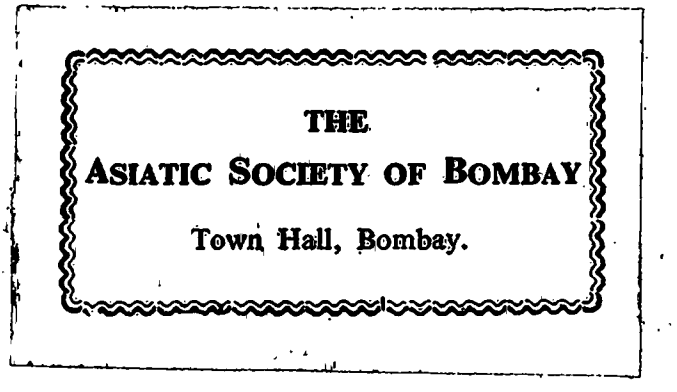
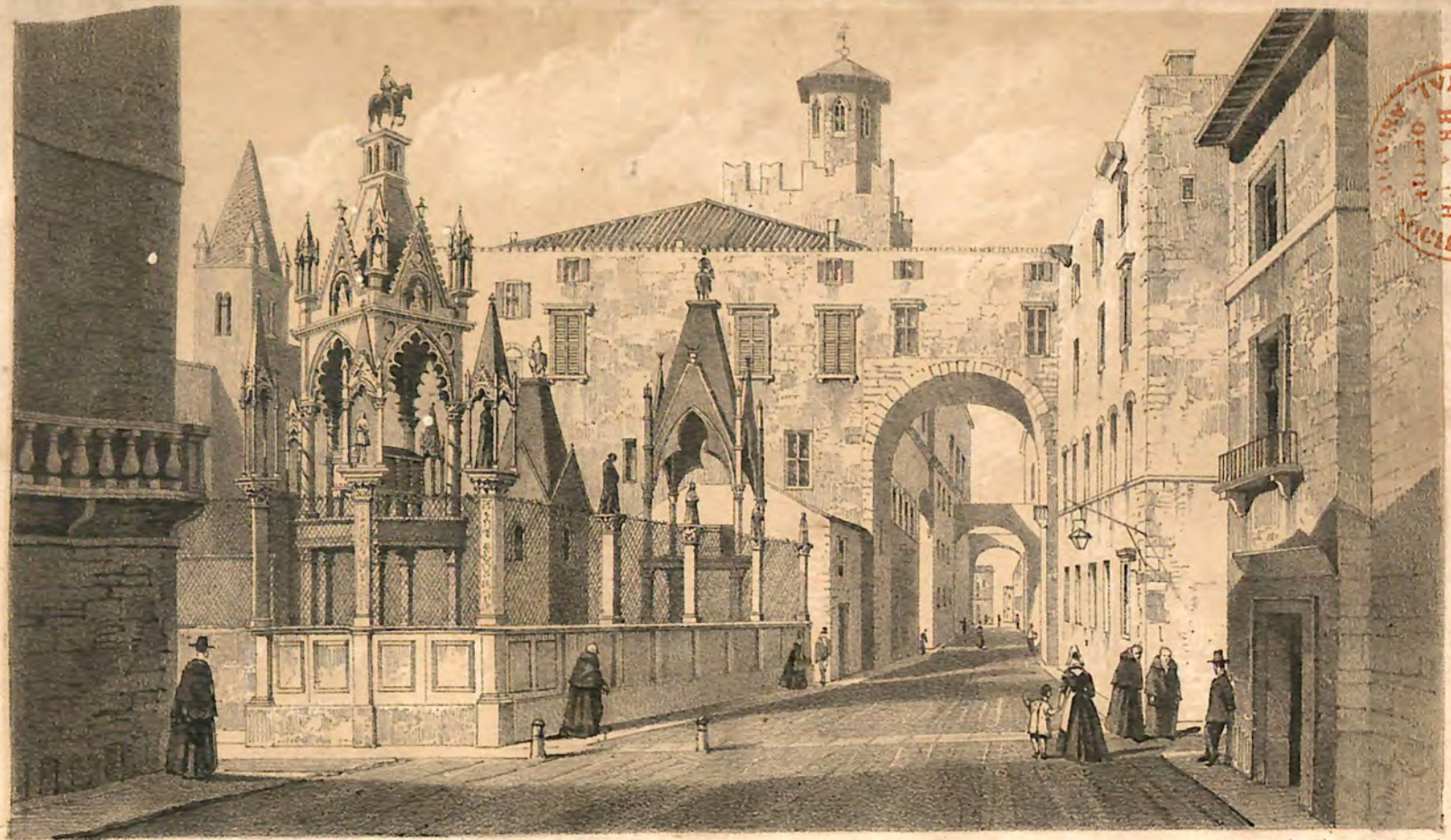

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A TOUR

TO AND FROM VENICE,

BY THE

VAUDOIS AND THE TYROL.

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BY

LOUISA STUART COSTELLO,

AUTHOR OF "A SUMMER AMONGST THE BOCCAGES AND THE VINES,"
"THE ROSE GARDEN OF PERSIA,"

ETC. ETC.

"The sundry contemplation of my travels, in which my often rumination wraps me, is a most humourous sadness."—*As You Like It.*



LONDON:

JOHN OLLIVIER, 59, PALL MALL.

1846.

INTRODUCTION.

To almost every traveller in the North of Italy Venice is known; to every painter, poet, and admirer of the arts, that beautiful city is dear; and so well and so much has it been described, that the stranger imagines he is already acquainted with all the details of beauty which belong to its fairy land: but on his arrival at the spot where those palaces of the Fata Morgana rise out of the enshrining sea, he finds that all is new, all is startling, all is fresh, as though he had never looked on a Canaletti, or read a line of description of the most bewitching of all places in the world of fancy or reality.

Those who know Venice may not object to compare the impressions of the last comer with their own; those who do not, may be excited to visit the lovely gem of the Adriatic, and already the road to it is strewn with flowers and spread with velvet; the rail-road from Venice to Padua is completed, and others are in active progression to Milan, to Turin, to the Lago Maggiore. From London to Paris is a rapid journey, from Paris to Lyons will shortly be as quick, and, very soon, it will be nearly the work of a few idle days to visit the shores of the Lido, and to 'swim in a gondola.'

Then, how many charming pauses may be made between! what mountains, and lakes, and cities may be seen on the way, *at the stations* in the North of Italy!

It will be as easy to go to Venice as to Belgium, and who will resist the temptation, having even only a week or two to spare?

Travellers whose time is their own, journeying thus without fatigue, will linger long on their route, and, according to their enthusiasm, will regulate their movements; but to travellers of all descriptions Venice may become as familiar as Paris before very much time has elapsed, and to those who are fond of roaming I offer these sketches, as the latest which they may choose to guide them on their envied way.

A TOUR TO AND FROM VENICE.

CHAPTER I.

THE ENTRANCE BY SAVOY.

BOURG—COSTUME—BELLEY—THE RHONE—LAGO BORGHETTO—SUNSET ON THE MOUNTAINS—ILLUMINATION—CHAMBERY—MUSIC—PALACE—WALKS—CATHEDRAL—THE FAVOURITE—FORMS AND COLOURS—ST. REAL—VENICE PRESERVED.

JUNE had just promised summer suns and cloudless skies, after the cold and ungenial spring of 1845, when, with the intention of visiting all that Italy could spare of her beautiful scenes, during a short tour, I left Paris, and traversed that least interesting part of France to the eye, which leads towards Savoy.

Our route was by the railroad to Orleans, and from thence by Bourges, to which curious old town many pleasing recollections of former rambles attach themselves in my mind, and, after leaving Moulins, the remainder of the way was new to me. Macon*

* Macon has an unhappy celebrity in the history of the persecutions of the sixteenth century, when the city, after great resistance, was taken by Marshal Tavannes, and subjected to his cruelties. It was given up to plunder, and yielded a good harvest

and Bourg I had not passed before; and here I was amused at the female costume, particularly at the latter place, where a round black beaver hat is worn, the little crown of which is covered with rows of lace, as well as the brim, over which dangle, in the wearer's face, four long lappets of black silk edged with lace: a gold cord and tassels complete the head-dress, which is the strangest and least convenient of any in this part of the country, yet not unbecoming to a pretty face, few of which I, however, saw.

We reached the charming town of Belley, which

to the Catholic conquerors. It appears that Madame de Tavannes had a peculiar genius for discovering Huguenot hidden treasure, and for her part of the spoil had no less than one hundred and eighty trunks of moveables, as Beza relates, "besides the yarn-stuffs, all sorts of linen, as bed-clothes, table-cloths, and napkins, wherewith Macon was reputed to be better furnished than any other city in France. As to the ransoms, rings, utensils and other precious things, the value is not known, but only so far, that those who had the management of such affairs, said to their friends, that Tavannes got there as much as would have purchased ten thousand livres a year."

The "Leaps of Macon" are of as horrible fame as the "Noyades of Nantes." The governor appointed by Tavannes to guard the city was a wretch named St. Poinct, who made it a practice to give feasts to the rank and fashion of Macon, and then indulged them with an exhibition which was called "The Farce of St. Poinct," and consisted in making some Protestant prisoner leap from the bridge into the Saone, where he was drowned. This delectable entertainment was much enjoyed by the orthodox ladies who beheld it.

stands amongst groves of perfumed trees and is surrounded by meadows full of glowing flowers, when we began the descent of a fine bold mountain rising above the majestic Rhone, a river, grand and glorious wherever its deep blue waters appear, whether purple and transparent, rushing wildly through the streets of Geneva, or ushering the traveller into Savoy beside beetling rocks and caverns echoing to the hoarse murmurs of its troubled surges.

A fairy suspension-bridge, one of those wonders of art, placed as if to startle the lover of rude nature, as he gazes on the triumph of man's industry amidst scenes whose sublimity seems formed for solitude alone, conducts the traveller across the river.

Here the officials of the Sardinian Government exercise their office and their vigilance, disturbing the effect produced on the mind by the first sight of a stupendous line of rocky cliffs by which the onward road lies. These seem to meet and close the way, till, at length, they give place to magnificent groves of trees, to spreading corn fields and vines, whose festoons are already allowed to take a broader sweep than those of receding France.

It was in the early evening of a brilliant day that we ascended the mountain whose zigzag road leads towards Aix les Bains, our destination for the night. Thick forests of dark fir-trees rose on either side, through the boughs of which the sun gleamed richly, throwing chequered lines of gold over the winding path. The birds were loud in their rejoicings that a happy

season seemed beginning, likely to increase in brightness and warmth with each ripening day.

Presently the scene assumed a darker and wilder character as we reached the summit of the mountain, and, in a few minutes, the toilsome pace we had travelled for some time was exchanged for one quicker and more cheerful, as we commenced the descent. Before us the continued winding of the road disclosed, through openings in the woods, ranges of mountains crowding over each other, of different heights, all coloured by the vivid rays of the now declining sun: some of an emerald green, some a shining grey, and some tinged with a rich deep brown. Far below, in the plain, lay, like a gem, a beautiful transparent lake, surrounded by high hills, whose dark forms were coloured of the deepest violet. While we were gazing on this charming vision, the sun sunk suddenly behind a huge stony mass, and, in an instant, a blaze of splendour was sent up which gave the whole scene the effect of magic. The violet hills became spotted and streaked with hues reflected from clouds which appeared all of gold, and were hovering over their summits: the lines of strata came out soon after, clearly defined in the liquid light as though the interior riches of a mine were being pointed out; this grew more and more intense, till every ledge and projecting angle caught the glow and blazed out burnished and glittering with ruddier strength. Then appeared tints of metallic green and purple,

like those on the changing wings of tropical birds; sometimes they faded a moment to return still more brilliant than before, till at length every other colour disappeared, and the whole range of mountains, near and distant, became one mass of ruddy golden light, as if the wide region had suddenly taken fire.

The lake below reflected all these changes, lying like a magic mirror to receive the wondrous pictures which passed over its surface.

At the time that the transforming hand of approaching night was working these wonders, we were descending the steep road, turning and winding till we thought the mountain would never cease to shew us the variegated face of the lovely Largo Borghetto, and its surrounding hills of burnished gold.

At length we reached the town of Bourget, and there learnt that the recent rains had so much injured the road to Aix, that it was scarcely prudent to continue our route thither, as the shades were becoming deeper: we decided, therefore, to proceed to Chambery, and for more than an hour drove along a road perfectly level, bordered with a triple row of poplars.

As we approached Chambery we observed an unusual quantity of light: and long lines of houses, all gay with illuminations, began to disclose themselves by degrees, till every tower and pinnacle and outline of the town came out in glittering

relief against the sky, and announced a public rejoicing for the arrival of the King of Sardinia, who was just come to pay a visit to his good subjects in this part of Savoy. We drove up to an enormous hotel, all blazing with rows of lights in every window, and our fears of finding no room were instantly dispelled by the attendant spirits of this enchanted palace, where the first impression of the vastness of Italian inns was made, as I entered the spacious apartments allotted me.

It was true that morning somewhat destroyed the illusion that I was in a palace, as the finely inlaid boarded floors were then discovered to be far from clean, and the streams of melted wax which had poured down the walls were less graceful than the brilliancy they had given birth to on the previous evening.

The sun was still propitious to us, and we walked about the town of Chambery on the day after our arrival, which was Sunday, enjoying its beauties, which are probably not always so apparent. In general this first town in Savoy is dull and deserted, but the presence of a royal personage had given much life and bustle to the place. Groups of military were seen in the streets, some easily recognised as amateurs, who had assumed a warlike guise only for the time, in honour of the king; gaily dressed townspeople walked arm in arm; and the women's strange head-dresses of embroidered muslin, being clean and white, had even a picturesque effect, though

not graceful in themselves, being flat as a plate and round, placed at the back of their heads. They wear short waists, are clumsy, and have little grace or beauty to boast of.

I never remember to have heard such unpleasing military music as at Chambery: the drums and fifes, which did much duty on this day, seemed all wooden, and only succeeded in making a deafening noise, as they swept proudly along past windows where numerous tiny blue flags, semée with white crosses, shewed the loyalty of the inhabitants.

There are many fountains in the town, but none of any elegance; the streets are wide and clean, and one street of arcades is very handsome.

The old palace of the Dukes of Savoy is a lofty and imposing building, preserving many vestiges of its original antique towers and battlements. It is now the residence of the Governor, and the King was lodged there during his stay, which was expected to be short, as the object of his visit was to learn particulars respecting a dreadful fire which had destroyed the town of Sallenches, and rendered it the sad wreck which we afterwards saw on passing through it on our return from Chamouny.

The chapel of the Ducal palace is very elegant in its form, and some of the ancient painted glass still glows in the long delicate windows, though modern taste has done much to destroy its effect. From the flight of steps at the chapel door the sudden apparition of a range of rocky peaks, of grotesque form,

is startling as they rise between the trees at a distance. There is a pretty shady public walk near, which, of course, formerly formed part of the castle court, and the hills from hence, though of rather clumsy form, have a certain air in their singularity not displeasing. There is nothing very remarkable in the Cathedral, which is profusely ornamented, and the roof richly fretted like net-work, in a style which does not satisfy the lover of the pure Gothic. I could not help contrasting it with the unrivalled church of dilapidated Bourges, which I had just had time to revisit for a few moments on my journey from Orleans.

Many hours had I passed formerly under the magnificently beautiful roof of St. Etienne of Bourges, always in admiration of its grandeur and sublimity, but never did it appear to me finer than when I last paid it my hurried homage *en passant*. High mass was being performed, and the dark solemn lofty aisles echoed to the rich full tones of the organ, and the clear deep voices of the choristers: streams of rainbow light checquered the marble floor from the finest tinted glass in the world, and the ruby, emerald, and sapphire of the countless windows blazed through the deep gloom, dispelling and adorning it. But that a journey to Italy promised so much, I should scarcely have been restrained from lingering long in that favourite retreat, and once more exploring the mysteries of the city of Jacques Cœur, one of the spots which most interested me in my former wanderings.

Strangely different are the churches of Savoy; and, at first, the passion for painting, gilding, and adornment apparent in this region, strikes the admirer of purer and simpler taste with something like disgust, which is only to be dispelled when the gawdy colouring he sees in imitation is exchanged for true marble, of every bright and soft hue and shade, that the most delicate pencil could delineate. To me, for instance, wedded as I have been to the sombre severity of Norman and Saxon architecture, accustomed to grope in shadow for the exquisite foliage, the graceful wreathes and flowers of stone which conceal themselves in the huge masses, which they succeed in rendering light and graceful by their persevering embraces, to me, even the really lovely marbles of Italy, the pink, and yellow, and red, and green pillars, crowned with golden capitals, the mosaic roofs of every colour, and the chapels glittering with riches of every description, appeared at first sight flaring and gaudy, and unworthy to compare with my beloved Gothic: even as the unclouded sky, blue, intensely blue, without a shade, dazzled rather than pleased my eye.

The stranger often, doubtless, experiences this first disappointment, on finding himself suddenly in new and unaccustomed scenes; his resource must be to "bide his time," and his patience will be rewarded: his eye becomes *educated*, and as he begins to understand what he sees, he gives every new scene credit for the beauties it affords him.

As for enchanting Italy, whoever enters its magical precincts coldly, quits it, even if he have only beheld its threshold as I did, a devotee; and as for Venice, where I, alas! took my leave of Italy, whoever sees that "city of the heart," wonders how he has existed before he become a lover of the most mysteriously poetical of all places under the sun. So, perhaps, thought St. Real, the ingenious author of the "Conjuration des Espagnoles contre Venice," who was born at Chambery. His very curious work is so well written, and with such an appearance of truth, that it is difficult to regard the narrative as otherwise than authentic. To us

"it hath a spell beyond its name"—

Since it furnished Otway with the subject, and most of the characters, of his famous and beautifully pathetic play. Belvidera is the only imaginary personage in the piece, and the fate of the conspirators, though as tragical, is not followed, for obvious reasons, by the poet. He has seized the character of Pierre with great ability, and has caught the spirit of the plot with singular fidelity: the characters of Bedomar and of Renault might have been made more of, had he written a romance instead of a play, but, in dramatic compositions intended for the stage, it is difficult for any one but Shakespeare, to condense a whole life into an hour successfully.

St. Real makes Jaques Pierre a Norman and a corsair, renowned as the most gallant captain of his time; with a spirit and manners beyond the wild

sphere in which he loved to move. Having become master of a good fortune by his boldness, he retired, though still in the flower of his age, with a wife and family, from active life, and the Duke of Savoy considered his dominions honoured by his taking up his abode at Nice, which was in his jurisdiction. Here, it seems, Pierre kept quite a court, which was frequented by all the adventurers by sea and land, whom the love of glory brought into action. They sought him as their oracle and leader, he was the arbiter of their differences, and the object of their admiration and respect. So great was his reputation that the Duke d'Ossuna became jealous that so renowned a captain should not have chosen his dominions, rather than those of any other Prince, and flattered by his desire to possess him as his friend, Pierre consented to transfer the honour of his countenance from one Duke to the other. He had, however, scarcely established himself on the coast of Sicily, before his old love of the sea and adventure returned, and it was not long before the Turks had reason to regret his arrival in their vicinity. He ravaged the whole shore of the Levant, and brought home magnificent spoils to his equally adventurous master, whose ambitious projects on Venice had just been roused by the Spanish Ambassador Bedomar, and as nothing could possibly jump so well with the humour of Pierre, as a plot so extensive and important as that conceived against the proud Republic, he readily lent his hand to assist its success.

Renault, the ancient lover of Belvidera, and the poet's cause of the failure of the plot, is thus introduced by the *soidisant* historian.

Nicolas de Renault was a French gentleman, a refugé at Venice, for some unexplained cause. He was extremely poor, but esteemed virtue higher than wealth, and loved glory beyond virtue, for if he could not attain the object of his passionate devotion by worthy means, he did not hesitate to adopt those the most criminal. He had adopted from the ancients that rare carelessness of life, which is generally the spring of extraordinary designs, and he regretted those antique times, when individual merit influenced the destiny of a state, and when those who possessed great qualities never wanted an opportunity of shewing them.

The character of the Spaniard, Bedomar, is still more forcibly drawn by St. Real. He is represented as one of the most powerful and dangerous spirits that Spain ever produced, as the writings he has left behind him testify. He had also formed himself and his ideas on the model of the ancients: he compared all that they recounted with that which passed beneath his own eye. He carefully observed the difference and the resemblance which all things bear to each other, and how certain combinations attend the nature of these similarities and varieties. He generally decided in his mind the event of an enterprise when he had heard the plan and foundation. If he found by the result that he had been deceived,

he examined into the cause of his error, and sought the reason of his mistake. By anxious study he became aware of the surest methods towards a successful end; comprehended the true ways and most propitious circumstances which lead to a happy result to great designs. This habitual practice of reading, of meditation, and of observation of the affairs of the world, had raised him to such a point of sagacity, that his conjectures on the future were looked upon by the council of Spain as prophecies. To this profound knowledge of the nature of great affairs, he added remarkable talents to use it; he possessed a facility in speaking and writing inexpressibly fascinating; had a marvellous instinct in comprehending the character of persons at a glance, with manners always gay and cheerful, and the appearance of more vivacity than gravity, avoiding mystery, and almost approaching *naiveté* in his address; of a free and complaisant humour, the more impenetrable, because he appeared open to all inquiry; tender, insinuating, and flattering; he had the secret of gaining the coldest hearts, and he could command his feelings so as to seem perfectly calm in the midst of the most fearful agitation.

CHAPTER II.

THE PASS.

VALLEY OF THE ISERE—THE WILD CAT—THE PONT DU DIABLE—THE FORT—MONT CENIS—THE PASS—MEMORIES—HOSPICE—DORA RIPARIA—VAL DE SUZA—ST. GEORGIO—I TRE CARLI.

SUNDAY is very strictly observed at Chambery and throughout the Sardinian States, so that the towns on that day have all the quietness and propriety of a Protestant country. I did not feel interest enough in the adventures and recollections of "the self-torturing sophist" to seek out les Charmettes, where Rousseau passed some of his early days with Madame de Warens, and as Chateaubriand says, "pour prix de l'hospitalité qu'il en reçut, de l'amitie qu'elle lui porta, se crut philosophiquement obligé de la déshonorer."

We left Chambery soon after day-break on a fine but fitful morning, and pursued our way through an interesting country, the mountains tipped with snow, beckoning us on beyond the flowing Isère, which we crossed by a steep picturesque bridge, flanked with antique towers, at Montmeillan. Festoons of vines threw their garlands on each side of the road, from tree to tree, primitive looking carts, drawn by fine oxen, passed us every now and then, and we met market people from distant villages, hastening to-

wards the town with the produce of their farms and meadows, looking neat and cheerful. Little chapels with pointed roofs, their edges of tin glittering in the sun, peeped out of encircling groves; and patches of snow, lying low in the hollows of the hills, told of the past winter.

We went through many villages, almost crushed in amongst wild craggy rocks, at the entrance of valleys which suddenly opened out and displayed smiling fields sloping down to the sparkling Isère, which winded on its silver way, spanned by a variety of pretty rustic wooden bridges. Sometimes we entered a gorge, whose savage features contrasted strangely with the cheerfulness we had left behind.

Rugged rocks of grotesque forms came peering over the nearer range, and one huge block for several leagues frowned upon us in the shape, clearly defined to fancy's eyes, of a cat-a-mountain, now glaring with huge fierce eyes, now concealing itself as if in act to spring down upon us, now fully revealed and menacing. Beyond Aiguebelle the scenes become still more wild, and more snowy peaks were apparent, shining in a strong sun, which enlivened our way for some hours.

Here and there on the heights, from distance to distance, strange ruins appeared, indicating the spots where castles formerly commanded the passes, and offered formidable barriers against incursion; some of these are picturesque, but, in general, present no very striking or impressive features, though they

harmonise well with the ruggedness of the whole scene.

We were not fortunate enough to obtain the view of Mont Blanc, with which a clear sky sometimes favours travellers, threatening clouds, which occasionally burst in showers, veiling the distant prospect entirely from view, as we reached St. Jean de Maurienne, once a place of consequence, but now without interest as regards the vestiges of old time, which give importance to insignificant spots. The town is almost new, with handsome houses and colonnades and good public walks.

After passing St. Michel, the scenery improves; fine fir woods clothe the hills and the impetuous Arc rushes headlong over enormous blocks of impeding rocks with ceaseless roar. Beyond rise in stupendous grandeur awful looking snow peaks, which the windings of the road now conceal and now disclose.

Illumined by flashes of lightning, we observed, rearing its huge form exactly in our path, clearly defined against a mass of black mountains and menacing thunder clouds, a gigantic fort, perched on the utmost summit of a pile of rugged rocks which formed an isolated pyramid, towering above the valley. Round and round the mountain, like an iron belt, ran batteries and strong fortifications, defying attack and courting assault. This we found was the fort of Lesseillon, the grim sentinel who guards the passage to Italy.

Standing on the Pont du Diable, a bridge which connects the fort with the road, we were not a little amused to see a lady, with a smart parasol and Parisian costume, leaning on the arm of a military man, and looking anxiously down the road, probably expecting the arrival of the mail or some courier with despatches. However magnificent the position of the fort, or sublime the scenery round it, I could not help pitying the pair, so much of whose time must be necessarily passed in this solitary and dreary retreat, magnificent to the eye of a traveller, who admires as he passes, but melancholy enough for a resident all the year round.

We met with no wolves, though there are said to be many in the neighbouring forest of Bramante, being more or less fortunate than Horace Walpole was on this spot, when travelling with the poet Gray, but were sorry to find that the clouds gathered thicker as we ascended the steep road to Lans le Bourg, where we were to sleep, and from whence we were to cross Mont Cenis next day. This mountain defile is extremely grand and gives promise of the higher and more stupendous ascent which ushers the stranger into Italy.

At Lans le Bourg I was by no means sorry to see a large fire blazing in our apartments, and to look through the closed windows at the snowy mountains and dashing waterfalls before us.

When we began the ascent of Mont Cenis, at six o'clock the next morning, the weather was grey and

cloudy, but we still hoped the sun of June would have power enough to assert its supremacy: we were, however, disappointed, and I can only think of having traversed this pass into Italy as if in a dream: every object before, above, around us, was enveloped in a thick white mist, which cleared away during the three hours of our passage only enough to permit us occasionally to see masses and patches of snow on the peaks nearest, but shut out entirely every prospect removed a few hundred yards from the route. We safely passed the sometimes dangerous spots where travellers are wont to be assisted by cantonniers, whose occupation was, for the present, gone: the snow ploughs rested unused by the way-side, and no appearance of peril gave animation to the dreary scene.

Although it was impossible not to regret the absence of the sun and the blue sky, which must give a magical beauty to this wild region, there was something to my mind extremely solemn and imposing in the total isolation into which I appeared to be suddenly plunged. A world of cloud and vapour spread around me; the way before, the precipices beneath, the deep ravines, the stupendous peaks, all were confounded in one chaos of white mist, which seemed continually rising from some unknown abyss below, and curled its transparent arms round and round thicker columns of unsubstantial vapour, which appeared constantly forming on the sides and tops of dimly-seen crags: these

snowy mists now moved rapidly, now crept slowly, along the rocky edges, which cut them for a space, and were then instantly shrouded. Once they fled suddenly before a slight breeze, and a faint ray of light struggled for mastery. Far beneath, across the shadowy gulf, a rainbow threw its vivid but transient colouring, and then faded into space; wide fields of snow were displayed in that moment, extending to a great distance, and the wall of ice and snow which rose on one side of the high road gleamed bright and mysterious: there was no impediment, and I had some difficulty, so free was the road, in recognizing the places where we were assured great caution is necessary in severe seasons. When we paused on the summit of the mountain we were accosted by several persons, who had tales of hardship to relate, which, though the dates might not be justly placed, were probably too true of some period of their lives, and books of the testimonials of travellers to their useful services, were produced, exhibiting names of friends who had gone before us and required more aid.

To me, one of these memorials was sad: I had heard from a friend, whose name I read amongst others, an animated account of the passage of this very mountain but a short time before, when I had no prospect of attempting it myself: he talked then of renewed health and strength after a pleasant journey, and looked forward to the probability of

many happy years to come. Since that day the grave has filled with gloomy shadows all that smiling scene of future promise, and mournful regret has taken the place of hope. If the bright sun had shone gayly on the snows of Mont Cenis at that moment, instead of the veil of mist that shrouded them, I should have felt it less in unison with the melancholy thoughts which the sight of a few words, written by a kind hand, in the guide Peretti's favour, had conjured up.

At the Hospice, once the abode of benevolent monks, now occupied by the officers of the custom-house, the usual ceremony of inspecting our passport was gone through, while we sat in the pouring rain endeavouring to comprehend the possible utility of the great precautions taken by foreign governments against the imagined machinations of tired travellers.

For some time the descent was dreary enough, it was precisely the same weather as that I had met with when crossing the mountains in Auvergne, to the beautiful retreat of the Monts Dores: I knew that beneath me lay a fine romantic country, but a thick blanket was hung between it and my sight, and not a chink appeared through which I could peep to behold its charms. At length the violent rain abated, the clouds rose, and a few scanty firs announced that the snowy region was left above. The descent is gradual and extremely easy, but as we advanced we saw evidences of dangers surmounted,

in the broken parapet, which the descent of some avalanche had destroyed during the late winter. The defences of the zigzag road are so solid, and so substantial, that it must have been a mighty mass whose fall could have swept away so strong a barrier of stone.

Strange alterations have taken place in this stupendous mountain since the days when the mighty Emperor Charlemagne, and his poetical army of peers and paladins, waded amongst the then untrodden snows, and hewed themselves a passage over the opposing rocks, which barred their way to conquest.

We descended into the pretty plain of St. Nicolas, and found ourselves once more amongst meadows and vineyards, with the fine height of Rochemelon before us, beckoning our advance. Molaret is the first village in Piedmont, and is particularly shabby and unattractive, but the country between this and Suza is interesting. So tender was the green of the trees, and so fresh the enamelled meadows, that it seemed as if spring had but just begun, the sun shone faintly through the persevering mists and gave some animation to the rural scene, which is succeeded almost immediately by a dreary rocky way, full of savage beauty, till the angry Dora Riparia, swollen and yellow, dashing gloomily along, announces the vicinity of the Roman town of Suza, where we arrived accompanied by rain and clouds, which enveloped the surrounding mountains in

mantles of mist, giving their giant forms the aspect of unquiet, wandering ghosts, perhaps of those very heroes of Charlemagne's host, whose adventurous steps first explored these regions in days long past, or it might be those of a leader, whose fame filled Europe as widely: for we were now on the spot where part of the French army of the first Consul, under the command of General Thureau, suddenly appeared amongst the astonished Piedmontese, and here, from every height, glittered the arms of a resolute band, bent on conquest and glory, on their way to join the chief, who had, in despite of nature, crossed the great St. Bernard with his army, and was just drawing round him his invincible troops, covering all the country between the Dora and the Adda.

Where the long since demolished fortress of Brunetta, once the monarch of the scene, frowned in majestic grandeur, the soldiers of Austria had posted themselves, vainly endeavouring to impede the resistless passage of the insolent foe; but all their efforts were vain, and many of them were taken prisoners and borne along with the torrent which rushed, by this avenue, into Italy.

St. Giorgio, through which we passed, is a town of no consequence, but worthy of remark, as being the birthplace of the historian, Carlo Botta, who was one of the "executive commission." Piedmont, after the battle of Marengo had re-established the

dominion of France in Italy, was governed by a triumvirate: the three members were all named Carlo, like the deposed Prince whom they replaced. They were ridiculed as "i tre Carli," and the following epigram was frequently repeated:—

Le Piedmont versait des larmes,
Lorsque Charles était son roi;
Quels pleurs et quels alarmes
A present qu'il en a trois!

CHAPTER III.

TURIN AND ITS ENVIRONS.

PIAZZA CASTELLO—THE CASTLE—ITALIAN HOTELS—THE WINDOW—SHOPS—THE ALPS—STARLIGHT IN THE PIAZZA—LE JEUNE AVENTUREUX—GATES—THE HAY CARTS—THE CATHEDRAL—CLEMENT MAROT—THE PRETTY GUIDE OF PINEROLA—THE HAUNTED HOUSE—THE BROTHER—THE INN.

Turin, although a modern town, with scarcely a vestige of antiquity about it, is extremely striking to a stranger, who sees in it the first Italian city. It is approached every way by immensely long avenues of fine trees, which are certainly formal, but convey an idea of grandeur to the mind, as announcing an important place. As there are no suburbs, you enter the principal street at once, and the cleanliness, neatness, and excellent paving, peculiar to this part of Italy, are immediately apparent.

We drove into the magnificent Piazza di Castello, and as we had to wait some minutes before it was ascertained whether there was room for our party in a palace-like hotel, at the doors of which we stood, I had time to observe the splendour of our position.

The centre of the enormous square is occupied by so extraordinary a building, that I could scarcely imagine but that my eyes deceived me as I looked upon it. One façade presented a Palladian front,

highly ornamented with profuse carving. There were fretted pillars, rich capitals, and finely adorned windows; the whole surmounted by a row of delicate statues, standing out against the clear blue sky, and shining in a brilliant sun: behind this, as if to "point a moral," I perceived a rugged sombre brick building, forming another front, flanked with huge towers, with open parapets, and exhibiting unquestionable marks of high antiquity. All between, on either side, was shabby, dilapidated, ruinous, and unsightly; a mass of crumbling walls, and neglected tenements: and this strange congeries of edifices, I found, was the present regal palace, formerly the abode of the ancient rulers of the land. Either one portion or the other of this singular pile should be removed; if the old, then the modern improvements would show to advantage; if the new, then the venerable towers would look in their right place, which at present they do not. Why, in rebuilding the palace, something similar to the style of the antique towers, probably too strong to be destroyed, was not attempted, seems a marvel; or why extreme simplicity was not adopted in the architecture of the new part, instead of the ambitious overloading of ornament which glares in the eyes as it now stands.

This mass, imposing even such as it is, is called *the old* castle, and, in one corner of the square, rises a long penitentiary-looking building, with two unequal wings, called *the new*. Behind the chimneys of this,

peeps an open-work dome, which seems as if carved in ivory, so delicate is the tracery on it.

Countless domes and spires, some gilded and glowing in the sun, others bristling with statues and pinnacles, rise above the lofty houses which surround the square: the lower portions all open arcades, which extend as far as the eye can reach down the opposite streets. In many of the houses there are open arcades to the upper stories, letting in air, and giving a light effect.

While I was gazing with interest on this scene, we were summoned to enter the courtyard of the hotel, and were ushered into splendid rooms fitted up in the most elegant taste, and having numerous windows of a gigantic size opening into the square, and exhibiting from them all the wonders which I had been contemplating below.

The splendour with which Italian inns are fitted up leaves Paris far behind: the immense size of the rooms, and their loftiness, is extremely impressive to a stranger accustomed to such dwellings in France; and I was of the number of those who are greatly surprised by the first appearance of the first Italian hotel to which I had been introduced. The walls of the chamber which I chiefly occupied during my stay, were hung with blue damasked satin with a golden border. A small iron bedstead, beautifully worked, stood in a recess, shaded by white muslin curtains mixed with blue satin, with rich fringes. The bed curtains were of embroidered

muslin and geranium-coloured cashmeer; the white-coverlet had two deep flounces of embroidery: crimson-satin chairs with gilt backs, alternated with blue fauteuils, a white marble chimney-piece, gay carpet and painted ceiling completed the ensemble, and a window of huge dimensions opened into a balcony, from whence I could watch the goings on below, where, in the piazza, men looked like mice, from the height which our second floor was above them.

The only thing in which Paris has the supremacy in furnishing, is in the article of looking-glasses, for all here were small and poor, and contrasted as strangely with the rest of the adornments, as the rude iron handles of the locks, and the ill-painted white doors.

The first thing a traveller does, on taking possession of his new domicile, is, to hasten to his window, and look forth. At Turin his curiosity is instantly rewarded, for in few places are more characteristic sights to be beheld at a glance.

Exactly beneath my window, I observed a group of people, in a variety of costumes, crowding round several men, who were dressed in the Neapolitan garb, and were perseveringly droning and squeaking forth their tunes on the shepherd's pipe, and the mountain bag-pipe: these were wandering *piffararij*, well known in more southern latitudes: another group were busy listening to a boy with an organ and fantocini; workmen were carrying home goods, coach-

men were driving open carriages with elegant horses, filled with smartly dressed ladies, grisettes without cap or bonnet, were tripping along, flirting their green fans; at a distance, a procession of priests traced a black line across the pavement, darkening the bright sun-light, which fell full upon the open space: here and there paced along a friar in coarse brown robes and corded waist, and two or three monks in black gowns, with white facings, their cowls thrown back and their shaven crowns shining, walked rapidly on, often accompanied by an abbé-looking personage, with cocked hat and smart black silk stockings and buckled shoes. These churchmen invariably walk with a firm proud air, as if they felt that their rule in the Sardinian dominions was secure; most of them are handsome and dignified, and look quite conscious of their advantages.

The next movement of a new comer after his visit to his window, is, to descend and make a closer acquaintance with the objects that have attracted him. This I did with little delay, and found much amusement beneath the extended colonnades, which lead on from street to street, and from square to square, with little interruption. The concourse of people was extraordinary, and it appeared to me, during my short stay at Turin, that the same crowd was always to be found there; therefore, though it is by no means considered a gay capital, it must at any rate be called cheerful and bustling. Every now and then we came to a recess, before which the massy

folds of a red curtain hung, which, being drawn aside, disclosed a richly adorned church, the altars blazing with lights. The shops were full of wares, and facing them on the opposite side of the arcade were placed piles of goods, tempting the purchaser nearer: amongst the articles exposed, finely wrought iron bedsteads were the most common, and there seemed no end of toys and trifling objects of slight value. Fine fruit and great quantities of cheese were displayed everywhere. Priests and monks, dandies always smoking, smart girls in black lace veils holding fans coquettishly in their hands, military men and peasants, jostled each other in the path, which, though wide and broad, seemed incapable of holding all the promenaders. I met a party of females in black robes and veils, each wearing a most extraordinary shaped stiff white cap, peaked in front like those represented in the manuscripts of the fourteenth century: they were accompanied by a priest, and had a most picturesque appearance. I understood they were a new order of sisters not long established.

Most of the shops are kept by French people, and a good deal of French is spoken here, but the mellifluous tones of the charming Italian nevertheless greet the ear at every turn: the first time they are listened to, the most agreeable sensations of admiration arise, and it never occurs to the stranger to be critical as to the dialect's purity.*

* Delighted as I was with the sounds of the language I heard all around me, I was little able to appreciate the opinions of native

I walked along the Contrada del Po, under fine lofty arcades which extend their shade on each side of the way, towards a wide spreading square, and the grand river, whose name alone conjures up crowding recollections. The Superga crowns a neighbouring eminence, and reigns the presiding genius of Turin, appearing at every turn, as we had beheld it when entering the city by the almost immeasurable avenue of Rivoli.

Crossing the bridge I mounted the steep hill which conducts to the terrace of the Capuchin Church, from whence all the glories of Turin and its neighbourhood are seen to infinite advantage. I was here forcibly reminded of the Pyrenees, seen from Pau, for before me I beheld the majestic Alps, in a long massive line, spreading out their snowy bosoms to the purple and gold clouds of evening, and glittering with the brilliant hues of sunset. The city lay grand and imposing on its wide plain, surrounded

Italians, competent to pronounce on the dialects of Italy. I thought all the phrases and words I heard beautiful, although the language common to the vale of the Po and in Lombardy generally is considered harsh and rude enough to betray the barbaric descent of their inhabitants: while at Venice and in the south of Tuscany, as well as at Rome, the softness and melody of the tongue is said to prove its purity from admixture with foreign races.

The patois of the different towns and districts, the existence of which is so great a drawback to improvement, I had no opportunity of examining or comparing, but I can hardly imagine that to my northern ear, there can be any dialect of Italy which would not be pleasing.

by the Collina and lesser hills, all dotted with shining villas, seated amidst embowering groves. The immense number of these country seats of the nobility and gentry is quite surprising; for leagues the hills are covered with them, and their beauty and vastness tell of great wealth and comfort: a perfect city of *plaisaunce* is without the precincts of Turin, and within a short drive.

The vallies and plain seemed teeming with cultivation, and the whole scene was one of prosperity and riches.

I met on my descent from this fine height, which is a favourite point of view with the townspeople, with four of the fraternity of blue penitents, whose office is to attend the sick. On their dresses were figured a skull and cross bones, but though so solemnly attired, they were all bustling along in a very worldly manner. They belonged I was told to San Rocco.

By the time I had returned to the Piazza de Castello, the usual crowds had assembled to take the evening air under the arcades, though their numbers certainly prevented what they sought, for the heat was so intense, that I was glad to walk in the centre of the streets.

Unnumbered stars sparkled in the deep blue sky, and I enjoyed the view from my high window in the hotel; the glittering lights round the Piazza, which defined the form of the lofty colonnades, had a gay and glowing effect, contrasted with the huge square

mass of the castle in the centre, whose gigantic towers rose proudly, as if in contempt of the pretty row of white statues opposite them, whose delicate forms came out against the clear back-ground, and gave them the character of guardian sylphs, watching over the princesses within the decorated palace beneath. They might be waiting to hail the birth of a little prince, an event hourly expected within the regal walls.

In this very palace an adventure occurred, which night and silence recalled to my memory.

At the time that Francis 1st was on the eve of the battle of Marignan, while the Swiss were hesitating whether to come to extremities or not, the youthful folly of a young soldier decided the question. Turin was made the scene of an absurd adventure by the daring of Fleuranges, called Le Jeune Aventureux.

He commanded the Black band, in the service of Francis, and became aware that there were a hundred Swiss officers in Turin, whom he pretended not to know were invited to an entertainment by the Duke of Savoy, with the express intention on the part of the Duke, of endeavouring to renew the treaty which had just failed between the Cantons and the King. Fleuranges thought it would be a feat worthy of commendation to surprise these guests of the Duke, and perhaps thus put an end to hostilities, as it was well known that Francis was desirous, if possible, to avoid bloodshed.

Accordingly, he introduced some of his men to

Turin at night, and allowing the banquet to be entirely concluded, he made a most unceremonious visit, with his resolute band, to the quarters of the officers, who had all retired to bed, not a little overcome with the good cheer they had enjoyed. He took them all prisoners without resistance, and was exulting in his success, when the Duke of Savoy, indignant at this insult to his honour, which was compromised by the detention of his guests, insisted on their being instantly freed. Much against his will, the imprudent young captain submitted, and the enraged Swiss returned to their camp, more furious at their capture and the ridicule thrown on them, than thankful for their release.

Fleuranges, in telling his own story, insists that Francis approved of his conduct and blamed him for agreeing to give up his prisoners, as, if they had been retained, the war might have been spared, for the Swiss would not have ventured a battle with all their officers absent.

Turin has now no gates to exclude an enemy, but in the time when the struggle was going on between the Emperor Charles and Francis the First, it was strong and imposing, with walls, gates, and ditches.

While Martin du Bellay was governor of Turin for Francis, amongst other schemes to surprise the town was the following.

Cesare da Napoli, the commander on the Imperial side, had endeavoured to bribe some soldiers of the

garrison to surrender a part of the rampart; these men feigned consent, but immediately informed the governor of the proposal, who took measures accordingly. Three of the Imperial soldiers were allowed to come secretly to inspect the spot of intended entrance, and retired well satisfied, not dreaming of the counter-plot which was to defeat them.

Although, however, du Bellay had obtained correct information of the enemy's intention, the plan might have succeeded, owing to the jealousy he felt of Boutières, whom he was obliged to leave in command, while he hastened to Paris, having received suddenly news of his brother's death. All that he condescended to name to Boutières was, that he suspected a plot, and cautioned him to examine all the hay-carts which might enter the town.

The Imperialists, meantime, under cover of a thick fog, advanced towards Turin, and at a short distance awaited the success of their *ruse*. They then sent six carts laden with hay, and driven by men wearing the dress of peasants, into the city. They presented a passport, purporting to be signed by Boutières, at the first gate, and were permitted to pass. Raimonet, a French officer, who was on guard at the second barrier, asked the price of the hay, and on hearing an exorbitant sum demanded by the carter, suspected there was some treachery. He bade his lieutenant thrust his pike into the cart, the weapon was withdrawn covered with blood, and at the same time six soldiers well armed issued from beneath the hay. Each of the other carts produced a

similar load—the drivers threw off their disguises, and flew to arms. A contest then ensued, and the moment was perilous for the French, for the soldiers without, hearing the tumult, were ready to force their entrance. At this juncture a farrier with infinite presence of mind, broke with his sledge-hammer the chain that held the portcullis, and so gave time to the troops of the garrison, who hastily flocked to the spot, to shut the gates: and thus, for this time, was Turin saved to the French.

The Cathedral is in a style by no means uncommon in this part of Piedmont: the decorations struck me as singularly paltry: all the pillars are painted like a French café: bunches of grapes and vine leaves in wreaths spreading over the whole. The ceiling and walls are painted and gilded, but I could not admire the glare of colours in the frescoes, which, however, are considered to possess merit; the whole style seemed to me far inferior to that of the modern churches in Paris, although in the same taste, which I have not yet learnt to delight in. There is a great display of silver plate on the grand altar, and the royal tribune is excessively ornamented. In the sacristy is a large Virgin, begirt with glitter, and there is much wealth displayed throughout the edifice.

Turin, although the government was, and is, by no means favourable to innovation in the Catholic religion, has always afforded a dwelling to those of the reformed creed, albeit this circumstance may

have been "fore-doom'd the soul to cross," of the ruler for the time being.

In Turin that daring spirit Clement Marot, died in 1544, having fled from place to place to avoid the consequences of his impertinent wit. When obliged to leave Paris, owing to the enmity of La belle Diane, he fled to the pearl of all Marguerites, the gentle Queen of Navarre, in Bearn, after which he was transferred to the care of Renée Duchess of Ferrara, where he offended the Duke and went on to Venice. His friends there procured his recal to Paris; and then it was that he translated the Psalms, and set the rage of singing them to all the *pious* court, who, finding out at length that they were thus becoming involuntary Reformers, closed their music books in anger and terror, and drove away the wicked poet who had seduced them to such a deed. He then fled to Geneva, but the austere and moral Calvin found him too gay and careless for an ally, and the saucy minstrel retired to Turin, where his last lay was breathed, and Francis the First had no more reason to be offended with his "cher et bien amé valet de chambre ordinaire Clement Marot," whose part he was so often obliged to take.

We made an excursion of a few days from Turin, to visit the neighbouring valleys of the Vaudois, where the remnant of those persevering Protestants, whom no persecution could shake, yet remain. La Tour or La Torre, is the chief town of the valleys, and

it was to that place there that our course was directed. The route lay along one of the long avenues leading from Turin to Pinerola: this is before the Protestant land is reached, and here we remained a short time to rest the horses, and during that pause proposed to see all that the little town offered of interest. This was comprised in a very small space, but we were assured that if we would take the trouble of walking about half a mile, we should be rewarded by beholding one of the finest views in the country. The church of St. Maurice, we were told stood on a height which commanded the country for leagues, and nothing could exceed its beauty. Our host was loud in its praises, our hostess echoed his boast, and, to prove the truth of the assertion, they summoned their youngest daughter to attend us to this land of promise.

Our guide was, as she told us, sixteen and a half, for at that age months are of importance; her general costume was not remarkable except for its neatness, but she wore a pearl necklace of great pretension, the beads arranged in a pretty pattern round her throat. Her long, thick hair was black and shining, without ornament, but carefully smoothed and plaited: she had a grave serious expression, which in a very few minutes disappeared, and gave place to a charming smile, dimpling her soft round cheek, whose colour was of the most delicate rose: her mouth was almost too small till she smiled and showed the pearly teeth within, her eyes were of a rich brown, with very dark long lashes, and her

penciled brows nearly met over a somewhat low forehead: her skin was dark but clear, and the shape of her head very graceful: she was below the middle height, and her figure seemed scarcely formed, her feet, a frequent fault with Italians, were large, and disfigured by huge white boots, but altogether she was as interesting and pretty a creature as ever I beheld. Her soft gentle voice was in curious contrast to the somewhat uncouth language she spoke, a mixture of French and Patois, but her native politeness accorded well with her pleasing manners.

She led us through a grand square of arcades, which she acknowledged did not equal Turin, where she had lately spent two days as a great treat, and we climbed up very steep alleys, where a clear current rushed down, cleansing as it flowed, to the height so vaunted, the beauty of which we hardly considered worth toiling so far to get acquainted with: however, our pretty guide's prattle was amusing enough to repay us, and we gratified her by our expressed admiration of the extensive flat cultivated vale beneath, watered by the river Volta. She pointed out to us an isolated house on a mound, which had the reputation of being haunted, and, though a place of great capability, was always deserted after a time by any tenant, who had been hardy enough to dare the adventures it afforded. She showed us the church of St. Maurice, and related the popular belief that it had been built by miracle, but when we asked her if she thought the

tale true, she smiled, and said—"Ah, that is what my brother asks me, and says, it is not in the Bible, which he is always reading."

On this she launched out into praises of this beloved brother, who she told us was so clever, so good and so amiable!

"You love him very much, then?" I inquired. She paused, and turned her large sparkling eyes upon me, as if to give more effect to her words, as she answered with much emotion—"Si je l'aime!—je l'aime comme mes yeux!"

We sat down in the edge of a field while my companion was sketching the church, and she went on to tell us that this dear brother, her only one, was studying medicine at Turin, which was the reason her father had removed from his former residence in the Val de Suza, where he had still an inn. "He is everything to us," she continued, "and as he is so clever, it was necessary he should study and improve himself. He draws too," she added, suddenly producing from her bosom two small sketches of heads on paper, really well done. Pleased with our praises, she resumed her conversation: "He gave me these before he left us, and I have never let them out of my sight." Nothing could exceed the joy with which she accepted an English pencil for her brother, and the blush and flashing glance as she put it carefully away, spoke volumes of delight, not diminished by a little present for herself.

We went back to the inn, excellent friends, and

left her to tell her tale to her pretty sister, who was sitting at work at a window on the landing place, and whose vocation was to be a nun; but her parents and her brother opposed her wish by all the arguments of affection, and had hitherto succeeded.

The hotel was a more curious sight than any we had discovered in our walk. The lower floor was occupied with kitchens and parlours, and the upper consisted in a range of neatly furnished bed-rooms, opening one out of the other, to the number of fourteen or more. The light was carefully excluded from each, as the weather was extremely warm, and, at first, we could scarcely see how elaborately painted both the walls and ceilings were. There were two and sometimes three beds in each of these rooms, and we were lost in wonder as to where occupants could be found for so many in a mere road-side inn, only four hours from the capital. It would seem a great many travellers were expected, and, as the host seemed a man of substance, probably there is no lack of custom in the hostelry of Pinerola.

CHAPTER IV.

THE VAUDOIS VALLEYS.

"A spirit, stronger than the sword,
And loftier than despair,
Through all the heroic region pour'd,
Breathes on the generous air.

"A memory clings to every steep
Of long-enduring faith,
And the sounding streams glad records keep,
Of courage unto death."

FELICIA HEMANS.

LA TORRE—MYSTERY AND WRONGS—CASTELUZZO—ANGROGNA—BAF AND BIF—THE CAVES—BOBI—THE PASTOR'S DWELLING—SILK-WORMS—HISTORY—PERSECUTION—PATRIOTS—THE GLORIOUS RETURN—THE CHIEFS—BARBES.

THE fine mountain of the Col de Viso had been conspicuous all along our route through the avenue from Turin, and at Pinerola the road, which had been hitherto rather monotonous from its straightness, improved extremely: festoons of rich vines appeared, hanging over trelliced avenues amongst the corn, or from pole to pole, like hops; on each side of the road all was riches and cultivation; the mulberry trees were growing with all their leaves,

from a cause which did not, however, speak of prosperity: the cold spring had killed all the silkworms in this part of the country. The women whom we met looked neat and picturesque in their large straw hats trimmed with dark blue ribbon, and a bow of the same on the edge.

Though La Torre, the capital of the Vaudois valley, is a sad shabby, slovenly looking town, there is an excellent inn there, extremely large and commodious, where the beds are admirable, the mattrasses being filled with the elastic leaves of Indian corn, which rustle most rurally, as if one had made a couch beneath the blue canopy of heaven in Arcadian simplicity: a fancy I did not find destroyed, when, on waking in the morning, I saw the luxuriant vines peeping into my room, from a balcony which extended all round this part of the house. I have seldom beheld so enormous a stem as the patriarch vine presented, whose huge branches twined round the timbers of the house, and half supported this pretty balcony.

The *Pane grisino*, which I here first saw, amused me extremely. It is made in long thin pipes, and was brought up at breakfast by the attentive and good tempered damsel who waited, in a long basket which she set on a chair near the table. These pipes are a yard or more long, as thin as a tobacco pipe, and are quite insipid, but not unpleasant; an armful seems cosidered merely a moderate supply, and I believe it is in general thought extremely good. The people at La Torre seemed full of courtesy and cheerfulness,

anxious to oblige, and remarkably civil: we had seen an instance of this on our route; for, having paused in a village, and sent to a house to beg a glass of water, it was immediately brought out by a neat-handed Phillis, on a tray in great form, nor could any entreaties induce her to accept a reward for her trouble. The master and his family, during the transaction, had remained gazing from their balcony, and took leave of us with unnumbered bows and good wishes, in which he was imitated by the whole village, bullock drivers and all. The latter class have a picturesque charge, for here those beautiful, white, classical-looking oxen appear, which look as if they had stepped from some antique frieze or altar, and become animated in order to embellish the scene, as they pace majestically along between the upward-curved shafts of the simple carts they draw.

I asked a stable boy at the inn of La Torre if he was a Protestant, and received for answer, "Yes, I have that honour." It was plain that the once oppressed race were now conscious that they had powerful friends to protect them; though the importance of having wrongs is not forgotten either, and the ill-nature and grudging spirit of the Jesuits of Turin is sufficiently felt. I inquired of a young man who pointed out to us the new college, why the entrance was left half finished, without rails or gates. He looked extremely mysterious, and said in a half whisper:—

"It is the Jesuits; we are not a free people—they will not allow us gates."

I afterwards found a less romantic reason for the fact, in the failure of the funds to complete the building.

Above the town of La Torre rises a very remarkable mountain, the summit of which is crowned by a rock called Casteluzzo, so like a ruined keep, that it is hardly possible to imagine it other than the work of man. A castle did in fact once stand there, which was demolished by Francis the First, when he made his entry into Italy through these valleys, by the Durance, having surmounted the opposing difficulties of the mountains on the side of Guillestre, levelling rocks, and cutting down forests on his way, in a manner only equalled by the surprising attempts and successes of Napoleon's army, in their Alpine adventures.

The mountains round crowd together with their snowy crests, as if to guard the entrance of the valleys, of which La Torre is the key: they have all high sounding names, and many a great act has been performed amidst their fastnesses, when the hunted Vaudois fled from rock to rock, and cave to cave, disputing every inch of ground, and battling for existence in the caverns of Cavour, in the heights of Taglioretta, of the Pra del Tor, the Cornon, the Alps de Julien, of Prali, of Perosa, Pornaretto and Riclaretto.

The Catholics have lately built an enormous

church and seminary in the very centre, blocking up the valley as the town of La Torre is entered: their view and object is to induce the Protestants to forsake their long cherished faith, but they have signally failed. The King of Sardinia came to the consecration of this church, and carried a lighted taper himself with great ceremony. Nothing could exceed the distress of the Protestants at this demonstration: visions of auto-da-fés, faggots and stakes rose to their terrified imaginations, and all the old persecutions seemed to them terrors likely to return. Instead however of ill, good came from this visit; for the King, who when he judges for himself appears kind and just, was struck with the simple loyalty and duty shown him by this unknown portion of his subjects, and expressed himself highly satisfied with the manner of his reception amongst them: so much so that he set about inquiring into their wants, and they now augur much advantage from the event. The Jesuits are extremely mortified in consequence, and grumble at his tolerance of these heretics, whom they dare not oppress as much as they desire.

The Protestant church is about a mile from La Torre, and the pastors of all the villages round have excessive hardships to sustain in the discharge of their duties, during the cold season, which lasts a great part of the year.

The people do not appear to be very poor, but are dreadfully dirty and slovenly: goitre prevails fearfully amongst them, and their intellects seem con-

siderably blunted, so that the task is hard to bring them to a proper tone of mind, and it is extremely difficult to persuade them out of old habits and prejudices. It is possible that this obstinacy may be as much the cause, amongst the lower classes, of their adherence to their ancient faith, as conviction of its superiority to the Catholic belief. A peasant woman, who led the donkey on which I made a pilgrimage to Angrogna amongst the wild hills, told me of several marvels which had occurred respecting persons who, for gain, had forsaken their church; these were so startling, that the barrier between this credulity and Roman superstition, seemed to me singularly slight. There is much supineness and carelessness about the people; as an instance, I inquired of our landlady, if the priests, who, I observed, wore green crosses, were of any particular order: she was surprised, and said she had never noticed that they wore one at all, although she had always lived in the valley, and had seen them every day of her life at her threshold: again she was not aware that the college was left unfinished, and exclaimed, when I spoke of it,—"Ah, mais à present que vous parlez de ça je m'en souviens *que je ne l'ai jamais remarqué.*"

Considering the very few objects that exist worthy to look at in the town of La Torre, the insensibility of our hostess was certainly remarkable.

I had already been amused at Turin, but here the circumstance was more apparent, by the singularity

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of all the clocks striking the hour twice: the *charivari* which is created by this eternal sound is anything but agreeable, and I was kept awake almost all night at La Torre, as I had been before in the great city, by the ceaseless clang of bells, reiterating their information in the most confusing manner.

Our ride through the deep defiles which lead to the wretched village of Angrogna, was extremely pretty, but rugged in the extreme: a chorus of cuckoos, nightingales and blackbirds, accompanied us throughout the way, and a scarcely less musical *undersong* of grasshoppers, made the very air ring, as we passed the newly shorn meadows, whose hedges were crimson with wild roses, and banks all enamelled with wild hyacinths and forget-me-nots. Every now and then an opening in the thick woods, disclosed some shining snowy peak, piercing the clouds, and towering far above the green hills in their front. The houses in all the villages are as miserable as can be conceived: they are generally of stone, rudely put together, with square holes for windows, painted white round, after the Irish fashion—alas! anything miserable recals that unfortunate country to mind. But before every door, climbing over every balcony, and each cottage has one, and a ladder for stairs outside, a beautiful luxuriant vine, throws its mantle of beauty, changing squalid deformity into grace.

We found the pastor of Angrogna absent from home on his duties to some distant community far over the hills, and his wife, a mere simple

peasant civilly received us, regretting his absence. As the sky began to look overcast we thought it safe to retrace our steps from the heights, and return to La Torre, before a storm overtook us. We therefore declined the minister's wife's hospitality, and turned the heads of our donkeys back again down the stony and precipitous descent.

As we threaded our way through the vocal groves and past fragrant fields of newly made hay, I endeavoured to converse with my female guide, who plodded patiently on, assisting my cautious steed in the rugged descent. It was not an easy matter to do so, for her patois was almost unintelligible, and her French little less so. I asked her if they were still in the habit of judging of the weather by the opening and shutting of a sort of artichoke, which I had heard they hung up in their cottages. She smiled, and assured me they did so, and that it was an infallible guide. This plant is said to open its leaves round the centre if it is about to be fair, and close them if rain is to be expected.

I had met with this account in a curious old book on the valleys of Piedmont, printed at Leyden in 1669, and I understood on inquiry, that in general the details it gave of manners and customs, would quite as well apply now as then.

The author there describes an animal, whose properties appear in his relation somewhat marvellous, but my guide at once recognized it by the names given. It is called Jumarre, and is said to be su-

perior to the mule: the largest size is denominated Baf, and a smaller Bif, by which appellation it is still known, though, as the Jumarre, it is not so. I imagine it to be merely a mule of superior strength and appearance, of which there are many throughout the valleys, both of Piedmont and Savoy.

Angrogno is one of the spots where the Protestant faith has continued from olden time — it would be incorrect to say it still *flourishes*, but it exists. At Roras, La Torre, and all between St. Marguerite and Villars and Bobi, the Protestants have had their strong-holds, and though driven from them by persecution from age to age, they have resolutely fought the good fight of faith, and kept their ground to the last. Their enemies dare no longer say of them as they once did:

El es Vaudés, é degné de murir.

He is a Vaudois and worthy of death.

Nor are they at liberty, if they had the desire, to carry those edicts into effect, which are still unrepealed, and which give fearful odds against the heretics. Even lately, when new laws were made at Turin, and the Vaudois petitioned to have these edicts revoked, a refusal was given. I looked over some of these, which are most cruelly severe against the Protestants, and restrict them from promulgating "loro falsa Religione:" the necessity is there pointed out of curbing them, and it is shewn "quanto fosse necessario di troncare il capo a quest' Idra." The eight

hundred Protestants in Turin, and the twenty-five thousand scattered in the valleys, still "stand within the danger" of their foes, if they dared use the power still left them, but all the Protestant powers of Europe extend their protection to this remnant, and they have nothing now but petty annoyances to dread.

The time was, when men, women and children were forced to fly from the fury of their persecutors, and to conceal themselves in caves, of which the most remarkable is La Roche de Vandelin, which is one of Nature's marvels, formed as if on purpose to afford shelter to the distressed multitude. It is capable of holding from three to four thousand persons, and is naturally divided into chambers, with apertures in the rock which serve as windows; it has a fountain of pure water in the midst, and places which can be used as ovens if required, and to crown all, has but one entrance by a single hole, so small that only one person can enter at a time, so that a determined individual could defend a whole community against a powerful enemy, as was done in the days of the perilous struggles which the Vaudois had to go through.

We were anxious to see some of the other spots famous in the annals of Vaudois history, and one fine morning set out for Bobi or Bobbio high in the valley of La Torre. A carriage can drive without difficulty as far as this village, beyond which passes lead far into the mountains, over the Col Julien and

the Serra le Cruel to Pralis. There is some monotony in the road from the narrowness of the gorge and the continual recurrence of the same scenery: hills are here piled on hills, with openings giving a view of threatening snow mountains, woods of luxuriant trees clothe the steeps, rugged villages stop the way with their precipitous, broken, dilapidated streets, through which it seems impossible to pass, but presently a long vista appears, and the traveller finds himself driving under an arcade of treliced vines, neatly and carefully trained: the only evidence of industry, which is presented to his eye. Nothing can be more beautiful than these continued arbours, and they seem the more delightful in contrast with the wretched hovels before which they run, and the savage villages to which they are the approach.

Wherever these occur, the path beneath is clear and smooth: the props are firm and good, and the graceful foliage is attended to with all the neatness that might be seen in an ornamental garden: but these once passed, all again is dirt and carelessness: pigs and poultry and children are pell-mell together in the muddy road, and the houses are mere dens of discomfort and misery.

The roaring mountain streams of the Pelice and Liossa echo far below the hills, leaping over rocky beds and foaming through the ravines. A long wall is still to be seen which forms an embankment made to protect the village of Bobi from the incursions of the Pelice: it was built by a grant from Oliver.

Cromwell, who was moved by the distress of the remnant of those

> "Slaughtered Saints whose bones
> Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold,"

when, in a severe season, the angry torrent, emulating their destroyers, burst its bounds and devastated their fields in a most terrific manner.

Though much alike in character, the higher mountains here are very grand, and their stupendous character increases as the valleys are penetrated further. Towards Finestrelle, the scene of the pathetic little story of Picciola, and near Perosa, the scenery is wild and wondrous in the extreme; and it is quite worth while for travellers to visit these, who do not meditate "more fierce and far delights" in the unapproachably sublime vale of Chamouny, the magnificent Grindelwald, or the stupendous passes of the Tyrol, to all of which our ambition led us.

At Villar, we paid another unsuccessful visit to the house of a minister, who was absent, like many of his brethren, on a pastoral excursion: his housekeeper did the honours of his simple cottage most cheerfully, and seldom could a picture be presented of less sophisticated habits and manners. Here was no evidence of comfort or luxury, no easy chairs and velvet sofas, no elegant curtains and commodious study tables, like a parsonage house in England. The general arrangement of the *Barbe's* abode was more resembling the scanty conveniences of a

Welsh curate of the Established church in neglected Wales.

We were shewn into the parlour, a boarded apartment, without carpet, furnished with three coarse hard chairs, and two deal tables, much marked with ink, but very clean; on one of these some German and French books, and a pile of papers, were placed. There were shutters to the one window, but no curtains; and there were large drawers to the largest table, which appeared to serve as cupboards, from the articles produced from them, namely, salt and knives. A tin tray, with sparkling water and glasses, was brought us, which was all we required, and all, probably, that could well have been given; and I imagined I detected a sigh of regret, and something like mortified hospitable feeling, as the good-natured housekeeper placed this refreshment on her absent master's table. The kitchen and sleeping rooms of the establishment were extremely neat, but as bare as economy could desire; yet there was an air of cheerfulness about the place, which shewed that the good clergyman, who bears a very high character, for benevolence towards the poor, was content in his simple domicile.

Villar is beautifully situated amongst the heights, with towering mountains above it, and a fine plain below, for the valley here widens out: the village is as rugged and wretched as its neighbours, and its imposing appearance at a distance, is strangely contradicted by the reality of ruin it presents on a closer view.

Throughout the valleys, the name of Bert is venerated, though the venerable pastor is no more; his family, however, who seem to have inherited his excellence and piety, are still scattered over this part of the country. I was surprised to find in the secluded retreat of Santa Margarita, near La Torre, in the wife of one of the sons, an accomplished and beautiful countrywoman, who, having settled there with her husband, has become a Vaudoise. The air of the valley, however, does not agree with the health of the amiable Englishwoman, and I saw, with sorrow, that she was suffering grievously from its effects, and pining for her native sea-breezes. I saw an establishment of silk-worms belonging to her mother-in-law, a very agreeable, cheerful old lady, whose whole mind seems wrapt up in the judicious management of these wonderful animals, which are more precious and useful than pleasing to one who has no personal interest in their success. I was unfortunate enough to express a dislike to the smell of the chambers where they lie on mulberry couches in countless rows, awaiting their mysterious transformation, when, clothed in gorgeous silk, they acquire their Pysche wings, never in these dwellings allowed to expand, but where they are destined to a scalding death, while their riches are claimed by others.

The tender mistress of all these cherished slaves was evidently shocked at my want of consideration for her useful pets; and taking up one of the ugly

insects to show me, exclaimed, caressing it, as I drew back, "Ah! le joli, le charmant petit bête—si bon, si genereux!"

Excellent and amiable as these creatures are, their vicinity is by no means pleasant, and the villages where they are nursed do not invite to saunter; every cottage is full of them; and so precious are they, that it is not uncommon in cold, rainy seasons, for the peasant women to carry them in their bosoms, to shield them

"From the bitter piercing air."

In Santa Margarita, there is a fabrique of cloth, which employs many hands. Its steam engines seem strangely out of place in this remote spot, but all of industry and occupation there is found in their vicinity.

A hospital has been established at La Torre by funds raised amongst the zealous and benevolent Protestants of England, and the Continental Protestant states; and the college I before alluded to, which is all completed but its gates,* and is a spacious and airy building. It has a library, more than half of which is composed of English books, which, when it is recollected that not one professor, or any person connected with the establishment, understands a word of English, is amusing enough. Those who make donations of books, which many have done largely, would do well to remember this circumstance.

The devotion shewn to the Vaudois by Colonel

* The munificence of an English lady, who was my companion, has supplied the necessary funds for their completion.

Beckwith, who resides amongst them, and by Dr. Gilly, who has written much respecting them, is highly appreciated; and much do both these benefactors deserve at the hands of the people whom they have so zealously served.

San Giovanni is out of the valley, and we visited it on our return to Turin. The churches stand well, and their position is singular: a very large Protestant temple, of a semicircular form, extremely striking from its high square towers, occupies the highest ground: on the opposite side of a little stream is the Catholic church, of a much humbler character; but humility or tolerance formed no part of the feeling of its occupants, for they saw with vexation their ambitious neighbour, and resolved to mortify the pride which offended them.

The priests, accordingly, represented to their bishops, that the sound of the nasal singing of the heretics was carried across the water, and greatly disturbed them at their devotions; add to which the sight of so many unbelievers distressed their minds. It was therefore decreed that a wooden wall should be erected in front of the Protestant place of worship, which should effectually conceal the abomination, and deaden the voices of the singers of the detested canticles. No part of this wall now exists, and it is to be hoped the uncharitable feeling of the opposing Christians disappeared with the last plank which divided them from their brethren.

There has been much contention amongst the learned respecting the origin of the appellation of

"Vaudois," which has never been satisfactorily settled. From very early times, the inhabitants of these valleys seem to have differed from the Church of Rome, and to have long professed the same faith which they now exercise, without opposition: but they shared the ill fortunes of their brethren, the Albigenses, and, though more peaceable subjects, could not escape suspicion and ill-treatment, at the time when Crusades were not confined to the realms where existed

"The foul Paynim
Who believeth on Mahound."

Before the middle of the thirteenth century, however, it does not appear that the Vaudois of the valleys were molested, nor forced to petition any of their princes for redress of wrongs; but about that period, Piedmont fell under the dominion of Thomas, Count of Savoy, and this prince, who had been leagued with many other chiefs under Simon de Montfort against Raymond 6th of Toulouse, on his return from Languedoc, after having severely chastised the refractory Albigeois, began to look about him at home, and to consider whether he could not find, amongst his own subjects, more victims to his awakened zeal. He could not, however, discover that they deserved his religious ire, and desisted from injuring them, on their humble representations. But the eyes of Rome were not closed upon their heterodoxy, and opportunity alone was wanting to attack them.

In the next century, Pope Paul the Second roused himself, and resolved to ascertain at once the exact state of the simple souls in these quiet valleys. He sent the inquisitor, Aquapendente, with a fulminating bull against all who did not instantly embrace Catholicism. The Duchess Yolande had been persuaded to accompany this bull by an edict to the same purpose.

Yolande was the sister of the Virgin-loving Louis XI. whose policy at that time led him to persecution, in order to please the church of Rome: and, to the grief of the Duchess, who was then regent for her son Philibert, she was obliged to use this severity against her unoffending subjects. The Protestants, did not tamely submit to the injustice, and were obliged to repel force by force, till the death of Louis XI. relieved them, for a time from their difficulties, which recommenced in 1534 in consequence of the hospitality which the Vaudois had granted to their distressed brethren of Languedoc, who fled into their valleys for refuge.

Duke Charles III. of Savoy stood their friend against the persecutors, for he counted on their loyalty to assist him when he disputed the entrance of Francis the First into the Milanais. But the superior forces of Francis triumphed over the feeble obstacles which Charles could offer, and the Vaudois, together with Turin, and a part of the Duke's possessions, became subject to the French monarch.

For some cause or other, Francis spared his new subjects, and when, afterwards, Emanuel Philibert married Marguerite, the sister of Henry the Second, his rights were restored to him, and the Protestants treated kindly by the princess and her husband. Then came the war against the Huguenots, and the ambitious and cruel Guises insisted on Duke Emanuel's extirpating heresy in his dominions.

The terrible Castrocaro was commissioned to visit the peaceful valleys of the unfortunate Vaudois; and by his orders, the fort of Mirabouc, of which remains still exist, was erected in the valley of Lucerne. The amiable Duchess Marguerite entreated him to be lenient towards her subjects, but he had the art to represent them as turbulent and unruly; and she saw with sorrow the impossibility of protecting them. The fatal 25th of August, 1572, revealed to all Europe the mistake its governors had made in trusting to the clemency of the house of Medici; and Emanuel Philibert, trembling for his devoted people of the Reformed religion, hastened to restrain the furious zeal of the fanatic Castrocaro: he even permitted the Vaudois to extend protection to the fugitive Huguenots, and for a space they had no reason to complain of severity: for if their rulers were occasionally unjust for a time, they allowed their natural indulgence to preponderate.

But the Inquisition and the Society de Propagandâ Fide became weary of seeing "Mordecai sit-

ting in the king's gate," and, more successful "adversaries and enemies," they brought about the destruction which they had long meditated.

It was represented to the Duchess Marguerite, sister of Louis the Thirteenth, and to her son Charles Emanuel the Second, that the Vaudois were not only rebels, but capable of the most appalling crimes, and that it was incumbent on them, as faithful followers of the true faith, to extirpate them, even to their very names.

Annoyed by these constant representations, the Duke and Duchess weakly allowed themselves to consent to a reform being worked amongst these outcasts from salvation; they shut their eyes to the truth, and permitted all the acts of horror which desolated the valleys of the Vaudois, in April 1655. In the old book, to which I have before alluded, are the most hideous representations of the dreadful scenes which took place: these frightful pictures are engraved most delicately, and with the utmost care, as if their subjects were of the most attractive nature, instead of monstrosities which freeze the blood to think of. The Protestant powers came to the relief of the sufferers, and obtained an edict called by the insulting title of Patents of Pardon, as if the victims had really been guilty of any crime towards their oppressors. They accepted however this concession, and, protected as they were, contrived to enjoy some tranquillity for a time.

Cromwell bestirred himself in their behalf, and

obtained them some privileges, as well as assisting them with considerable sums of money.

The revocation of the Edict of Nantes, which inflicted so deep a wound upon the prosperity of France, was deeply felt in the Vaudois. The bigoted orders from Versailles, were obeyed by the overawed court of Turin, and in spite of the representations of the evangelical cantons of Switzerland, the Piedmontese Protestants were sacrificed. Commanded by their sovereign to embrace the Catholic religion, or to quit his dominions, the Vaudois did not hesitate which to choose. They departed, and were received with open arms at Geneva, throughout Switzerland, in Wirtemberg, in the Palatinate, in Hesse and Brandenberg, many also took refuge in Holland, and elsewhere. Here they remained in exile for a short time, but there were spirits amongst their number, who could not brook the injustice under which they groaned, and who resolved, at all hazards, to regain their abandoned homes.

A determined body of about nine hundred assembled, with this intent, in the woods of Noyon, on the beautiful borders of the lake of Geneva, and crossing the lake, whose clear surface is a mirror to the eternal snows of the most sublime of all mountains, these patriot pilgrims of faith, crossed the mountains of Savoy, regardless of danger and fatigue, and reached at length the valley of Oulx, where their progress was arrested by a band of French troops. A violent struggle ensued, but those who fought for

their homes were not to be driven back, and a glorius triumph crowned their efforts at the bridge of Salabertran.

It was on the tenth day after they had left the wood of Noyon, that they reached the Val St. Martin, and once more trod their native soil: but from this moment their hardships may be said to have begun, they were hunted from place to place, and winter came with great inclemency to harass them still more. They concentrated their forces, and, concealed amongst the rocks of La Balsille, they fortified themselves as in a citadel, and subsisted on the scanty provisions they were able to procure in the neighbourhood.

M. de Catenat, who commanded the French in Piedmont, came in person to the valley of Saint Martin, and attacked, but without success, the fortress which the patriots had erected. Disgusted at his failure he abandoned the enterprise to his general the Marquis de Feuquierè, who, with twenty-two thousand men, after battering the fort for fourteen days with cannon, succeeded in becoming master of it. He entered in triumph, but found to his disappointment and amazement, that the besieged were fled to a man.

Profiting by the darkness of night, the Vaudois had contrived to escape, and almost miraculously, had crossed the most frightful precipices, and placed insurmountable barriers between them and their foes. They retreated to the heights, and concealed

themselves in the hamlets of Rodoret and Pralig, where they found for their subsistence a considerable quantity of corn, which the snow had preserved during winter, and which had never been reaped, owing to the war which disturbed the country.

This was the dawn of their good fortune, which the next summer became still brighter, for a difference having sprung up between France and Savoy, the Duke was delighted to find so determined a reinforcement of his subjects already on the frontier. He lost no time in offering them his protection and welcome, incorporated them into his own troops, consented to, and invited their return, and by his Edict of 1694, declared frankly that the persecutions they had met with were only submitted to by him, because he was compelled to give way to the superior force of a greater power.

Then arrived that epoch in the history of the Vaudois, proudly called by them, 'The Glorious Return;' the narrative of all those events is attributed to their heroic leader Henry Arnaud, surnamed the Great. But it was probably written by the Pastor Montoux, his equally celebrated companion and assistant in the work so bravely performed. Both were ministers of the Reformed religion, and both had devoted their hearts and their arms to the just cause, in which they so signally succeeded.

Arnaud's remains repose in Germany, where he died at the age of eighty years, full of honours and of fame. His tomb may be seen in the church of

Schœnberg near Durrmenz. The following is his epitaph:

"Beneath lie the remains of Henri Arnaud, the pastor of the Vaudois, and the commander of their troops. Though you here behold his tomb, no one can depict to you his exalted deeds, or his great heart, which nothing could subdue. Alone, the son of Jesse fought against a host of Philistines, and alone he put to flight their armies and their chief.

"He died the 8th September 1721, and was buried in the eightieth year of his age."

The pastor Montoux belonged to Pragelat, and as this valley was in the possession of the French, he could not return to it, and therefore went back to Wirtemberg, where he established a new colony of Vaudois.

The return of the Protestants to their valleys was the cause of new hostilities from France to Savoy, and Victor Amadeus was forced to fly from his capital, which with much of his possessions, had fallen into the power of the French: he shewed his confidence in his subjects of the Vaudois, by throwing himself amongst them, and found them full of loyalty and devotion, and ready to defend him as they had defended their own rights.

In a family at Rora is still preserved a silver goblet used by the prince in his journeyings, and which was left by him with his hosts, the family of Durand-Canton, as a souvenir, when he quitted their hospitable roof.

From this time the Vaudois were allowed the free exercise of their religion: the number of their churches

was however reduced to fifteen, and thirteen pastors were appointed to serve them, but their poverty preventing their supporting themselves, for the expenses incurred for public instruction, they were obliged to depend on the aid of those of the Reformed Church who were capable of assisting them. Queen Mary of England, wife of William the Third, granted a royal subsidy to supply salaries for the pastors of the Valleys, and even for those of Wirtemberg. The States-General of Holland contributed greatly to their support, and Switzerland was not behind in the benevolent work.

England still contributes annually considerable sums in aid of the Vaudois, and there is no lack of interest for this interesting remnant of the early Reformed religion.

The pastors of the Vaudois were called in derision by their enemies *Barbets*, as the Protestants of France were called Huguenots. This epithet came from the patois word *barbe*, uncle, by which name the clergy were called: old men are still so addressed, and formerly it was a title of respect: it was the custom also to designate a woman *magna*, aunt. This title of Barbets was chosen from disrespect by the Catholics, and in order to throw still greater contempt on the ministers, the same *sobriquet* was applied to a band of robbers, who for some time infested the mountains of Coni.*

* For this brief account of the Vaudois, I am chiefly indebted to a very interesting pamphlet, written by the late pastor of La

The late M. Bert, pastor of Torre, who watched over his flock with the most paternal care, wrote for them a series of hymns, which he wished them to sing on public occasions, rather than the popular ballads of the country: his was like, with a difference, the version of the Psalms by Marot, set to fashionable tunes, and which was adopted by the Court of Henry II. of France. The peasants of the Valleys now sing to Psalm tunes, lines on "the pruning of the vine," at the "gathering of the cocoons," at the "hay harvest," on the "departure of the herds for the Alps," at the "reaping season," and the "sowing of Indian corn,"—"the vintage,"—on the "potatoe crop," that of "hemp," of "chesnuts," and other periods of rejoicing and expectation. These simple verses are suited to their capacity, and are extremely good of their kind. I heard some of them sung by the school-children with all the force of their lungs, but I confess I did not perceive much melody amongst the rosy-faced crowd who lifted up their voices with such perseverance.

Torre, M. Bert: it is called "Le Livre de Famille," and is written in a familiar style for the use of his flock, in order to give them a general knowledge of their own history.

CHAPTER V.

THE ROUTE RESUMED.

STUPINIGI—NAPOLEON—THE GARDENS—THE IMPROVISATORE—POETS—MUSEO EGYZIO—PIAZZAS—THE STRANGER AT THE GATE—THE FUGITIVE—THE CULPRIT—THE HOSPITAL.

We paused on our return to Turin in order to pass an hour in the gardens of the royal hunting palace of Stupinigi, a pretty retreat at a short distance from the capital, very little visited by its owners, though apparently commodious and very agreeable. The palace has rather an imposing effect, with its long range of building, stables, menagerie and outhouses. All was so silent and deserted beneath the fine avenues, that it was with some difficulty we were able to discover any one to admit us to the gardens, and wandered about in the shade, watching for the appearance of some one who might chance to emerge from the closed doors. Our patron at last appeared in the shape of a little boy, who having volunteered to find for us,

"Old Adam's likeness set to dress this garden,"

we followed him beneath the shadow of a long wall flanked by a grassy ditch, till we reached an iron grate. Having arrived there he suddenly recollected

that he had no key and that the guardian of the hidden treasure must be sought elsewhere. We retired beneath the trees till we were assured that ingress was possible, as the heat of the day was increasing every moment, and at length were admitted amongst the pots of orange trees, and the charming, though formal walks of the Stupinigi gardens.

A glittering stag surmounts the palace, indicating its dedication to the pleasures of the chase, and the garden front is extremely elegant.

In this palace Napoleon rested when he was on his way to Milan, to be crowned King of Italy, and here he received the magistrates and deputies, who crowded to do him honour. Instigated by his artful and hateful Egyptianised favourite, Menou, whom he had instituted tyrant of Piedmont, he treated the cringing deputies with insolence and severity, for the first time shewing his real character, which it had hitherto been his policy to make the Sardinians and Milanese believe was mild, peaceful and indulgent.

The silly 'Shallows' of Milan started to hear him utter threats instead of soothing words, and exclaimed to each other as they retired from the stormy audience which the future Emperor accorded them:

> "And fall these sayings from that gentle tongue,
> Where civil speech and soft persuasion hung!"

But it was at Stupinigi that Napoleon first began to lay aside the mask he had assumed, and henceforth to adopt the triumphant tone of a conqueror.

We remained for some time beneath the shade of the formally cut trees, wandering along the fine avenues and in the maze, which reminds one of Hampton Court. I never heard such a chorus of nightingales and thrushes: from every brake their lovely voices sounded, till the groves re-echoed with melody: there were but few flowers in the gardens, but the gardener seemed anxious that we should think well of his skill, which was exerted apparently to cultivate little but pretty bunches of sweet-william, which, under the musical name of *garofalo*, we accepted as a treasure. The heat was at this time extreme, and the sun streamed with unclouded radiance, from a sky of intense blue: nothing could be more enjoyable than the soft air beneath the shade of these bowers, and I was sorry to re-enter Turin and cross the blazing piazza to our hotel.

The weather continued the same for several following days, and the genial climate of Italy seemed assured to us. I began to think there was here stability, and the absence of that humidity from which we suffer so much in England: but though it remained hot, the clear blue sky suddenly lost its radiance, fleeting clouds obscured its face, and a violent storm of thunder and lightning altered the front of heaven on the same night we returned.

Nothing, however, could exceed the brilliancy of the next day, and a fine air gave relief to the overpowering force of the sun. I was extremely enter-

tained watching the effect produced on the crowd in the square, from my customary station at my window in the hotel, in the exhibition of his powers, by an improvisatore, who stood at least two hours delighting his audience. I was too far removed above the scene of action, to hear his words, but, to judge by their success, they must have had merit, for every now and then, bursts of laughter and clapping of hands rewarded his efforts. He seemed to take advantage of any passing circumstance around him, and to introduce allusions to it in his address, for he occasionally pointed to individuals in the crowd which action never failed to excite mirth and applause.

The time was once when Turin fostered poets, and it may be that her old taste still clings to her modern walls, perhaps the lays of my friend in the Piazzo del Castello, might have vied with those of his brethren of the lyre, in the 12th century, when Turin was the scene of a poetical fête at the time that the Emperor Frederick the First met Raymond Berenger, 2nd Count of Provence here, and bestowed on him the investiture of his fiefs. The Count brought with him a distinguished suite of nobles, all poets, and the accomplished Emperor, to whom every language was familiar, heard with delight lays and poems,

"Able to draw man's envy upon man."

Frederick, in return for the pleasure thus afforded

him, addressed the poets in the following frequently cited lines:*

I joy to meet a knight of France,
A Catalonian fair to see,
For honour, Genoa I'd advance,
And in Castile my court should be.

Sing me the songs of gay Provence,
Let Trevisana's damsels dance,
And Aragon's fine forms be seen,
With Julian's pearl† of priceless sheen:
Bold England's hands and features fair,
And Tuscan youths of graceful air.

I was entertained in observing the scene I have described, as it proved that the old fame enjoyed by Northern Italy for her *improvisatore* is not altogether worn out. The tone of the poet I listened to was precisely that usually described as adopted in the olden time, something between speaking and singing. I know not if he spoke in the rustic language known as *Lingua Contadinesca*, adopted by Lorenzo de' Medici in his 'Nencia da Barberino' as appropriate and novel, and followed up by several poets, who admired its simplicity, but at all events, his allusions and the witty turns given to his discourse highly gratified his audience.

As the time we could spare at Turin would not permit of lingering, we contented ourselves with visit-

* Plas mi cavalier Francez,
E la donna Catalina: &c.

† The poet's meaning in this line is obscure.

ing only one of the sights of the town. I was attracted by the fame of the celebrated Isiac table at the Museo Egyzio. The museum, like all others of its kind, requires time and attention, and is more valuable to the learned than interesting to a hurried traveller. It is a work of no little perseverance and labour to reach the rooms where the chief treasures are lodged, in the upper story of an immensely high Palazzo. Few persons in Turin seem inclined to disturb the solitude of the custode, an old soldier of Napoleon's, who appears thoroughly ennuyé with his post, and who, delighted to have an opportunity of breaking silence, poured forth for our edification a history of his own hair-breadth 'scapes in Egypt, which was I suppose to serve instead of other information, as no catalogue or indication of any sort assists the ignorance of the stranger.

This belligerent guide, who was very loud and violent, and what with patois and energetic expletives startled the museum from its propriety, gave credit to Dr. Young for his discoveries, as well as Champollion, probably with a view of pleasing his English auditors. Every mummy and engraved stone seemed to revive his recollections of eminent deadly breaches, and he paused before many a grim seated statue, menacing it with his hand, and recounting the firings and desolations which he had witnessed in the country of the mute culprit.

The wonderfully preserved Isiac tablet of engraved bronze is certainly as great a marvel as its meaning

is a secret: it is as fresh and bright as if it had never been removed from the temple of Isis, which it adorned. If Egyptian deities could think, they might have cause for the derisive smile which is settled on the features of many of them, as they sit in awful rows, cold and watchful, with their stony eyes fixed on the contending and turbulent *savans*, who have so long disputed about this singular relic of antiquity, which, if not older than the age of Adrian, is a mere mushroom wonder, worthless of consideration in the presence of dark gods, whose unchanged forms have crouched upon their pedestals for thousands of uncounted years, and yet whose heavy features are as sharp in their outlines as if they had just started into the shape they chose to assume.

If the magnificent palaces of Turin were completed, the town would be one of the finest in Europe, but as it is, scarcely a single building is finished: many of them are decorated in part, as if to show what the intention of the architect was, while the greatest portion is left rough and rugged, waiting till some lucky accident shall cause it to be put an end to, according to the first intention of the designer. Thus it is, amongst many others, at the Palazzo Carignano, designed by the architect Guarini, which exhibits great profusion of finish on one façade, while the wings remain in an unfinished state. Half the houses round the great squares are in a similar condition, so that the city has the air of having been suddenly arrested in the midst of its construction.

Most of the squares are large and fine, and from that of Vittorio Emanuele the view of the Po and the Colina is extremely animating. San Carlo is the finest: it is adorned by a splendid statue, full of life and truth, of Emanuele Filberto, called Tête de Fer, the husband of Marguerite of France, the daughter of Francis the First. It was at this marriage that the fatal tournament took place, where the brother of the bride lost his life from the unlucky spear-thrust of Montgomery, a cause of enmity which the vindictive Catherine de' Medici would never forgive.

Turin, in spite of its modern improvements, cannot even yet divest itself of numerous recollections of old time, which continually recur in the midst of the admiration one feels of recent beauties.

Late at night, for not till that period is there any quiet in Italian or German towns, I looked across the large square where our temporary domicile was situated, where every object was uncertain in its form, by the light only of numerous stars, and the antique portion of the castle then appeared to resume its former consequence: those lofty towers, with long pierced loop-holes, rising proudly against the dark but still clear sky, spangled with glittering lights, looked like spirits of another time, which at that hour had their turn to preside over the fortunes of the city.

It was perhaps "on such a night," that the wardour of the gates of Turin, then strong and menacing and defying attack, was startled by a voice without, which demanded admittance. The sulky

wardour roused himself from his slumbers, and repaired to the wicket with his keys, but without the intention of using them in favour of the disturber, if he could avoid it.

"Who knocks so loud at this late peaceful hour?" was his querulous question, as he reconnoitred the stranger on the other side of the grate.

"Open quickly," said a hurried voice; "I am pursued and in peril. I have roamed from town to town, from village to village, and weary, faint and heartless, I come for protection to the Duke of Savoy against my enemies; they are close at hand —delay not an instant.

"A parole stolte orecchie sorde," replied the porter; "who are you that clamour in this way, as if you were a prince in disguise: how am I to know whether the Duke cares for your danger or yourself?"

"Admit me, I entreat," exclaimed the stranger, in accents of extreme agitation; "I hear their horses following me — I see lights gleaming and spears shining—I have no one to defend me, and am lost if I obtain not shelter."

"Who are you, friend?" returned the porter, rather startled by the earnestness of the stranger's entreaties; "can't you tell your name, at least, that I may judge if you are fit to be admitted into Turin,—I may get the worst for letting some madman in upon the Duke, for what I know. 'Al credulo grandi spalle.'"

"I am one," replied the stranger, "who was once honoured and caressed, whose name had a spell, the power of which would have made the gates of palaces fly open throughout all Italy,—now they are closed against me. I am Torquato Tasso. Go to the Duke,—tell him I fly from Ferrara, and come to his hearth for protection and pity."

"Tasso!" exclaimed another voice, as a young officer of the guard, attracted by the altercation, approached the spot,—"does Tasso stand at the gates of Turin and entreat hospitality in vain? Throw the doors open wide, and admit the greatest poet of Europe—the glory of my native Sorrento."

Tasso entered the city, travel-worn, faint and exhausted in body and mind; but no sooner had the Duke of Savoy learnt that he desired an audience than he was joyfully admitted to his presence, and assured of protection and welcome. He had neither money nor attendants, had wandered alone from one end of Italy to the other, and like the moth circling the light, had once more returned to the north and to the danger he dreaded.

Tasso was at this period, 1577, thirty-three years of age, in the full bloom of youth and fame, but already the fatal fire of genius had began to consume the mind it illumined: his passions were violent, his temper uncontrollable, he could not brook offence or slight, and he magnified impertinences into injuries, until he wearied those who would have shielded him. He had deeply offended the Duke Alfonso

the Second, by intemperate fury on more than one occasion, and if rumour spoke truth, by a too daring demonstration of attachment to the sister of the sovereign. His own panic at the consequences likely to ensue from his presumption, had, it appears, been the cause of his present flight, and he wandered, imprudently proclaiming at every court in Italy, his wrongs and his provocations, until the wrath of Alfonso grew as fearful as the poet's terrors and his conscience had imaged it to be in the beginning.

Discontented and restless, longing to return to the dangerous presence of Leonora D'Este, and again to dare the anger of her brother, or perhaps, hoping to find it appeased, Tasso allowed himself to become mistrustful of the Duke of Savoy, and soon quitted Turin, in the same state of agitated terror of his enemies as he had entered it.

Alas! he fled to his doom! for Alfonso, as a fitting accompaniment to the rejoicings on his own marriage with Margaret of Gonzaga, assigned the hospital of Santa Anna at Ferrara, for the abode of the supposed lunatic. Here the enthusiastic, impetuous, irritable and imprudent poet expiated by frightful suffering, the breach of etiquette, which had angered, and the complaints which had enraged, the proud prince who once cherished and boasted of the friendship of the first poet of the age. Horrible were the agonies of mind and body which Tasso must have endured, when he composed those appeals to his supposed friends, which stood

him in so little stead. Alas! the fair and thoughtless sisters to whom he appealed, and whose interest with their stern father he supplicated, probably threw aside his despairing verses with contempt, and braided their hair with flowers for a festival, while he still groaned in prison.

Affecting beyond expression, are those sad lines of his "O figlie di Renata!" less known, perhaps, than some of the exquisite verses which have crowned him with fame.

TASSO'S ADDRESS FROM PRISON TO THE TWO DAUGHTERS OF ALFONSO THE SECOND.

Oh, daughters of fair Renata,* attend!
To you I cry, who once have called me friend—
You, gracious, gentle, beautiful and high,
To you I dare recount my misery:
Dare tell a part of my distressful tale,
Dare hope that ancient mem'ries will prevail,
And years of past enjoyment still recal—
Before my banishment, before my fall.
And you will think, while sorrow shades each brow,
On what I was—on what I suffer now!
Who keeps me barr'd and chain'd in dreary shade,
In whom I trusted—and by whom betray'd.

Remember this, daughters of regal race,
Behold me with'ring in this dismal place;

* Renata or Renée, the mother of these sisters, had favoured the Protestants, and was, in consequence, long an exile and a prisoner. It was dangerous to mention her name at Alfonso's court, but Tasso ventured to do so, hoping to excite the compassion of her daughters.

Words are too faint to tell my load of grief,
Tears are my eloquence—my sole relief.
Where are the joys I knew when in your bowers,
The lutes, the songs, the wreaths of perfumed flowers?
Tears in their place, sad tears for me alone,
To whom such transient, blissful days were known.
Where are the sports that I was wont to share,
The glories, and the cherish'd studies—where?—
Where are the palaces, the bright arcades,
The festal lay, the mirth, the gay parades?
Gone—past—and I, in every pleasure crost—
Lost to all human hope—for ever lost!

Along the plains of Lombardy has wandered many a poet; this part of Italy indeed seems consecrated to the misfortunes of men of genius. Dante, Petrarch, Tasso, have fled from town to town in this region, and left the memory of their passage as a relic.

When Petrarch was seven years old, he saw the immortal Dante, then a fugitive, and over the same ground he had himself to fly in after years, when the chords of the great poet's lyre were hushed, for faction was still abroad, and strife continued to disturb the repose of genius. The Count of Mastini, the wicked nephew of the great Can, received the poet for awhile at Verona; at Milan he sojourned with the Visconti, with the Este at Ferrara, and in the Universities of Padua and Bologna, he occasionally forgot the vexations of party. At Venice the poet ambassador, called by the Venetians "The Doge of the Republic of Letters," negociated with Dandolo,

and to Venice he gave a precious library—not a vestige of which remains at this day! and it was near Milan that he concealed himself awhile from pomp and the world's glory, to live in his own world of books and poetry, and to converse on literature and taste with his frank and true friend and admirer, the poet of the Decameron, who sought him in his retreat with a mission of peace from Florence.

Boccaccio, much as he loved Petrarch, was more satisfied no doubt to see him in his seclusion than to have met him at the court of Milan, for he thus writes to him in 1354, reproaching the poet on his companionship with tyrants:*

"I would be silent, but I cannot; reverence restrains, but indignation compels me to speak. How could Petrarch so far forget his own dignity, the conversations we held together concerning the state of Italy, his hatred for the archbishop, (John Visconti) his love for solitude and independence, so far as to imprison himself at the court of Milan? Why did not Petrarch obey the dictates of his conscience? Why did he, who called Visconti a Polyphemus and a monster of pride, place himself under his yoke? How could Visconti win that which no pontiff, which neither Robert of Naples nor the Emperor himself, could ever obtain?"

When the lover of Fiammeta, the minstrel of the maligned Queen Joanna, fled in disgust from the unworthy treatment he received at the hands of a noble patron, who herded him with menials, it was at Venice that Petrarch's welcome made amends for the indignity; and doubtless the canals and lagunes

* Mariotti.

for many a moonlight night, the melodious confidences of the friends, while laments for Laura mingled with the sorrows of Sigismunda, one heroine perhaps being as fabulous as the other. There was but a year between the deaths of these great men, whose friendship lasted to the end.

CHAPTER VI.

"The population of the vales of the Po and the Adige, of all that vast tract which lies between the Alps and Apennines, down to the Adriatic sea, and which is still distinguished by the vague appellation of Lombardy, the fairest, as well as the richest part of the country, preserves evident marks of its northern origin.

"This beautiful plain, fenced as it were by its two snowy ridges, smiling like a garden, spreading like an ocean, with a thousand rivers rushing from the hills, a thousand towns glittering on the plains, crowded with ten millions of human beings, blessed with a severer but a healthier climate, dividing the vaunt of being the best cultivated land in Europe only with England and Holland, exhibits all the vigour of an eternal youth."

MARIOTTI'S ITALY.

SUPERGA—CHIVASSO—MARQUISES OF MONTFERRATO—VAQUIERAS—CRUSADING SONG—VERCELLI—THE LEGATE—THE TEA-KETTLE—RANZA—THE KNITTER OF LOMELLINO—ALBERGO DE' TRE RÈ—NOVARA—CHURCHES—IL MORO—COSTUME—CANAL.

I LEFT Turin much impressed with its beauties, and admiring to the last the imposing avenues which render every approach to the city fine. The Superga looks proudly over the extended plains, and towards the encircling mountains. This monument was erected to the Virgin by Vittorio Amadeo, in gratitude for the success of his arms against the invading French in 1706. It is a magnificent object in the landscape, and nobly crowns the

exalted height, where it stands supreme between the Alps and Apennines.

The roads are excellent and perfectly flat, nor is there any beauty to rouse the traveller for many miles. We passed through several slovenly looking towns, where high brick towers and portions of fortified walls tell of former consequence and ancient warfare. We changed horses at Brandizzo, as the pilgrims of old time did when on their way to the Holy city.

Chivasso is a large but insignificant town, though once of much consequence, and considered the key of Piedmont. The powerful family of Montferrato made this one of their places of residence, and, for several ages, bore sway over the surrounding district. As we drove rapidly through it, above the market place, I observed a huge red brick tower, of great antiquity, rearing its turrets far into the blue sky. On its summit waved the branches of several large trees which have there taken root, and flourish in that exalted position. They nod over the town like the plumes of the crusaders, on their helmets, and recall strange memories of the time when this battered ruin stood proudly forth, the highest of its fellows of the castle of Montferrato.*

* William of Montferrato (1292) had extended his sway nearly over the whole of Piedmont, and was at length taken prisoner by his subjects of Tortona and Alexandria, and shut up in an iron cage nor could his near relationship to the Greek Emperor and

In this now neglected spot, which the careless traveller, who does not trouble himself with old recollections, and does not care to be disturbed by them, hurries through, was once held the splendid court of the Marquises of Montferrato, powerful tyrants of the country, whose castle turrets inspired terror in the neighbourhood. At Chivasso, and at Casale, they alternately resided; and when not busy in making warlike outbreaks and chastising those who had offended them, they passed their time in listening to the effusions of the troubadour poets, whom their munificence attracted around them.

Here the famous Rambaud de Vaquieras sometimes sang his lays when he had attached himself to the service of Bonifacio III., Marquis of Montferrato, who led, with Baldwin and Dandolo, the fourth crusade, and who became sovereign of Thessalonica. Vaquieras was made a knight by his patron, for with his sword he was as distinguished as with his lute: and the Marquis, unlike the proud Alphonso, who punished the daring love of Tasso, was gratified by the poet's attachment to his sister, the beautiful Beatrice, with whom and her lover he reconciled a love quarrel, which had threatened to deprive him of the society of his friend and minstrel. This fair lady was called in the poet's verses his

the king of Castile avail him against the fury of the fierce republicans, who dragged him from town to town, exhibiting him like a wild beast. His sufferings were at length closed in a dungeon, where he had lingered two years.—*See* MARIOTTI'S ITALY.

Bel Cavalier, because he had seen her in sport managing a sword with great grace.

His lays excited the valiant Marquis to the expeditions in the Holy Land, by which he gained so much renown; nor was the poet forgotten in his conquests, for he gave him 'islands,' and districts to govern, even such as the hero of La Mancha promised his faithful squire. Many such songs as the following echoed through those towers of which I obtained a passing glance.

CRUSADING SONG.

God delights the good to raise,
And to Montferrato gave
Fame beyond the minstrel's praise—
He – the highest of the brave.

France, Champagne—all Europe calls —
"Drawn is Montferrato's sword!
Hie we to the Holy walls,
To the rescue of the Lord!

"Montferrat' has vassals bold,
Heaps of treasure and of gold,
All his stores in aid are thrown,
For the cause of God alone."

He who made the skies above,
He who formed the land and sea,
Wills that we should, for his love,
Go where all the brave should be.

Raise thy warlike voice Champagne—
'Flanders!' let Count Baldwin cry—
Sound the battle-shout amain,
Montferrat'—and victory!

The faithful troubadour, when he became master of rich possessions in Greece, sent back his tender thoughts of regret to these turrets where dwelt the lady of his love.

TO MY BEL CAVALIER.

Glory, conquest, power and gain—
All the vain world seeks—is mine,
Yet my heart shrinks back in pain,
And for ever I repine.
What avail my riches now—
Absent from that lovely brow!

I was richer far, and blest
In those transient moments flown,
When, the slave of love confest,
I could boast thy love my own:
Then I knew no joy but one,
Living in thy sight alone.

What to me are lands and towers,
Triumph's shouts and notes of glee,
Since I dwell not in thy bowers,
And have all—bereft of thee!
Vain the glory of my lot—
All is void where thou art not!

When the impetuous Dora Baltea is crossed, the hitherto flat country undulates a little, and a range of snow-covered Alps comes proudly into view; light feathery clouds were lying in the valleys, and filling up the gorges of the hills with their transparent forms, which rose gently upwards towards the

snowy summits, threatening to return in rain before long. The sun, however, was brilliant, and the air balmy, as we entered the ancient territory of Lombardy, and rested at Vercelli.

I was struck as we approached the town, with the numerous small turret towers which surmount St. Andrea, one of the principal churches; it is very grand, and there is much beauty of detail in the fine circular arches of the façade, in the cloisters and the ranges of grey and white marble columns which adorn the interior. This church was built by Cardinal Guala, who played a conspicuous part in the wars of King John of England and his barons, at which time he was the Pope's Legate; he is the prelate who is represented by Shakespeare as urging on the quarrel between France and England, and exclaiming to Louis of France;

> "All form is formless, order orderless,
> Save what is opposite to England's love.
> Therefore to arms! be champion of our church,
> Or let the Church, our mother, breathe her curse,
> A mother's curse on her revolting son."

There is a Norman character about the round doors and pointed arcades which I at once recognized and hailed with a feeling of affection, as if one of the venerable abbey churches of Caen had suddenly appeared before me: but the square turrets which surmount the whole are quite unique and more remarkable than admirable in my opinion: as well as the diapered tiles of the roof, which offended

my eye, and which reminded me of the same at Dijon, the floor-cloth effect of which is always so distressing, when observed on the fine but dilapidated churches there.

The Duomo of Vercelli is much less striking than the church of St. Andrea, but is lofty and majestic, filled with fine pillars of a rich coloured marble, and chapels adorned with more than usual taste, the altars and shrines exhibiting more grey and black marble than gilding and artificial flowers.

Our breakfast apparatus, at the large rambling inn of the Leone d'Oro, entertained me exceedingly. The waiters seemed very proud of understanding the mysteries of tea making, and, for kettle, brought and placed on a table near the long board where we sat, an enormous brass cauldron seated on a fiery *brasiero*, in whose depths the water boiled and bubbled in a manner to leave no doubt of its capabilities; main force was requisite to move this Vesuvius of tea-kettles when water was wanted, and our zealous attendant returned more than once to our assistance on the occasion, proud of his skill and of the commendations bestowed on its results.

Vercelli was the birth-place of an eccentric genius, who played a conspicuous part in the commotions of his country, during the period when Europe was torn by the contentions between Democrat and Aristocrat, as fatal watch-words as those of Guelf and Gibeline.

Ranza, the satirist, author of "The Catechism

of Tyrants," was born and studied here, and some of his family are said still to reside in the town. His wit, talent and learning, and the readiness with which he caught at all that could render his political opponents ridiculous, made him the darling of his party. He attacked all ranks and classes, governors, priests, and people; now turning the arrows of his wit against the abuses of one, now of another, sparing none, and bitterly castigating every abuse which came under his observation. It became at length expected that Ranza would speak, and speak to the purpose, on all occasions; and so accustomed were both sides to his severities, that his violent truths were heard without exciting the anger they at first inspired, for it was found that imprisonment and persecutions only rendered the sharpness of his satire more keen.

Day after day, pamphlets, eagerly looked for, appeared, and he himself was accustomed to stick his placards, announcing them, on the walls of Turin, while the amused crowd flocked in a torrent to catch a glimpse of the daring jester who shrunk not to tilt at all he met. His pasquinades were relished by the million, and those who winced beneath his biting reproof were obliged to endure it as they might. "It is only Ranza" became a common expression, and however severe or seditious, Ranza's wit passed.

One day he appeared in the great square at Turin, and kindling a large fire, he fed the flames with the writings of a friar to whom he was inimical, amidst

the shouts and applause of the multitude. When he died his funeral was attended with extraordinary pomp and ceremony, and followed by a great concourse of his admirers: when the cortège reached the gate Madarna, through which funerals are not allowed to pass except on occasions of great solemnity, an attempt was made to resist the body passing, but the well known cry of "it is only Ranza" obtained egress for it at once.

This was at the time when Napoleon was amusing the Piedmontese with his ambiguous treaties with Charles Emanuel, and while he kept both prince and people in uncertainty as to his real motives.

Vercelli witnessed the march of the successful hero's troops on their way to Milan, and had reason to remember their passage. Our route lay on the track of Napoleon's army, and it was not a little startling to reflect that this now quiet smiling scene once swarmed with a rude soldiery, intent on mischief and conquest, and what is called glory, whose loud voices deafened the hoarse murmurs of the Dora, the Sesia, and the Tecino, to which we now listened amongst their solitary rocks.

Soon after leaving Vercelli, we crossed a bridge of boats over the Sesia: the country is pleasing; fine walnut trees adorn the corn fields, and good-looking chateaux here and there give a cheerfulness to the scenes.

At a ruined town with a musical name, Lomellino, I first met with the beautiful head-dress of which I

had often seen representations, and heard descriptions. Two peasant women were sitting at a dirty hut on a stone bench, knitting in the sun, and talking to the stable people who were preparing our horses: both were striking in their appearance, and I could not sufficiently admire their madonna-like heads, as they reclined carelessly and languidly against the ruined wall of their domicile. One of them, who was in a dark dress, wore over her shining black hair a scarlet handkerchief, with a white border, kept out by concealed pins, which gave it a square form. The other, who had fine commanding features and magnificent eyes, with long black lashes, wore a *halo* round her plaited dark hair of those long silver pins terminated by large round balls, which are disposed so as to form a sort of nimbus to the head of the pretty saint who thus adorns herself. This elegant head-dress contrasted singularly with the poverty of the wearer's domicile, and the slovenliness of the rest of her dress, which was however made up of colours just such as a painter would choose: the stained stone of the back ground harmonized well, and the bright blue sky and clearly defined shadows round, lying prone in the rich yellow sun, all combined to make a charming study of the graceful knitter of Lomellino.

Monte Rosa had hidden his head in gathering clouds, and as we advanced on our way through the rice grounds the aspect of the sky became more and more threatening. Livid gleams burst over the vast

irrigated fields, where the weeders were busy amongst the golden-green rice, and presently loud growling thunder echoed amongst the distant Alps, whose summits were concealed in increasing mist. The hitherto sauntering pace of the postillion was suddenly changed into a gallop, as the big rain came thick and violent, and the sky grew every instant darker and more portentous. At length the deluge descended without mercy: nothing could resist its fury, and we drove rapidly into the stony street of Novara, with a stream of water running out at both doors of the carriage, for the flood had entered at every coign of vantage, and we were almost drenched in a few moments.

A fine antique palazzo, now the Albergo de' Tre Rè, received us, and the storm raged on without intermission for several hours in all the ungoverned fury of a tempest in the neighbourhood of the Alps.

Other travellers, arrested as we had been, came thundering into the inn yard, in diligences and post carriages, glad to find shelter from the overwhelming torrents of rain, and to escape the savage glee of the demons of the storm: for several hours the thunder never ceased for an instant moaning and roaring over the town, and dying off in low echoes at a distance, and continued flashes of lightning illumined the pretty arcades of the picturesque Albergo with unnatural day.

This was the first of the many storms I afterwards

witnessed in these regions, and whose violent beauties I so much enjoyed.

Our spacious apartments at the inn at Novara, had still the remains of much former brilliancy of painted ceilings and walls: the bedsteads were of cast iron, beautifully wrought, a pleasing improvement on wooden ones, and infinitely more likely to be clean and inoffensive. Round the inner court of the house ran an elegant richly carved stone balcony, the arches of the doors and windows, and the pillars which supported the stories, all were graceful and in refined taste, though considerably injured by time and change. No doubt this was once a handsome palace.

We had time in the morning to visit the Duomo of Novara, a lofty and handsome cathedral of early Lombard architecture. The fine pillars were disfigured by coverings of red cloth half way up: there is here some perfect tessellated pavement black and white, the work of Byzantine artists, but the bold patterns are Roman, and the figures introduced in the medallions are very singular bird-like creatures, with griffin claws, holding sprays in their beaks, storks and grotesque animals fill the compartments. That part of this remarkable pavement near the entrance is a good deal worn, and the colour of the black marble has become nearly grey with age and friction. There is one very interesting and curious chapel or baptistery, which presents all the appearance of a pagan temple: it is circular and supported by antique pillars: opposite the door of entrance, rather

sunk in the floor, stands a circular altar or tomb, hollow in the centre, and now used as a font. It is very remarkable and curious, as is the whole edifice, the walls of which, between the ancient columns, are covered with nearly effaced figures by Gaudenzio Ferrari, to which I had too little leisure to do justice by examining. On the walls of a cloister of the cathedral are placed numerous inscribed stones and carved monumental relics, in the same manner as those in the entrance of the Bibliotheque Royale at Paris. This is perhaps a safe way of preserving them, but they lose all their dignity by being thus plastered up with brick and mortar, pell-mell, one with the other, without connexion.

The church of St. Gaudenzio is spacious, and produces a noble effect, even though much of the decoration is stucco imitating Oriental breccia: there is however some delicate pink and white marble on the walls and altars. The mosaic pavement, similar to that in the cathedral, is well preserved and fine, and the works of Gaudenzio Ferrari which adorn the chapels are said to be of the highest order. The light was too dim to allow me to see their merits, and I strained my eyes in vain to catch the beauties of a celebrated picture in compartments over the high altar, some few figures of which, being more enlightened than others, gave me a grand idea of the whole.

I had in a former journey seen at Loches the dungeon of the ill-fated Ludovico Sforza, called Il Moro,

had looked through the double bars of his prison, and endeavoured to trace the drawings which his despairing hand had scrawled upon the walls; and at Novara I had perhaps unconsciously lodged in his palace, for it was here, by Swiss treachery, he was betrayed into the hands of the French, and after being dragged from prison to prison, expired in that horrible confinement, the same where Cardinal Balue had lingered, within a short distance of the chamber where the fine monument of the beautiful Agnes Sorel still delights the eye with its lambs and angels!

Novara was often the scene of contention in the wars between France and Italy. There Louis of Orleans, the husband of Valentina of Milan, underwent a terrible siege, which Brantome calls "Le souffreteux siege de Navarra ou il (Louis) mangea jusques aux chats et aux rats;" and here the Swiss gained a great victory over the French when fighting for the Emperor Maximilian, to revenge which Francis 1st resolved again to invade Italy.

To regain Novara was a main object with the soldiers of Francis 1st's army, who considered themselves disgraced by its loss. It was therefore a great triumph when, after their successful return to Italy by Piedmont, they found themselves again masters of this disputed town, the key of the Milanese.

There are remains of the Spanish dominion in Novara in the Eastern looking arches and pillars, of which some are seen in the streets: one range struck me particularly by the beautifully involved

pointed lines of its ornaments, and the lotus shape of its capitals. The boulevards are fine, with a splendid view of the snowy mountains from one of their terraces: whole streets of new buildings are replacing the old, and if the projects of building are completed, the town will be a handsome one in a few years.

The weather continued cloudy and our view of the snowy range was by no means clear, as we drove out of Novara along a flat road, without other interest than that it is bordered by fertile fields of lupins and corn, and that the vines depend from high trellices in graceful wreaths in every direction. We came shortly, however, to a long tract of desolate heath, beyond which the snowy heights were glittering in the sun, though their bases were involved in cloud and gloom. A high levée conducts across the marshy land towards the Tecino, and here we crossed the magnificent straight bridge of eleven arches, which ushers the traveller into Austrian Lombardy, and Piedmont is left behind.

The dress of the female peasants which I saw on the road was only remarkable as to the head-dress, apparently the sole vestige left of national costume. Two long pins confine the hair, which is always luxuriant, and these are here terminated by knobs as large as a goose's egg, by no means so graceful as the smaller ones at Lomellino: sometimes the head is covered with a handkerchief of brilliant colours, which held out by these pins, forms a not inelegant arrangement, the embroidered corners hanging down on the shoulders with

much grace: but in general the heads which they decorate were not pretty, and the children at the miserable cottage doors were the dirtiest, most squalid-looking little creatures I ever saw. The windows of most of the houses in the villages are defended from the sun by shutters covered with thatch or boughs, which have a characteristic effect, and, when the leaves are fresh, seems cool and pleasant.

The grand canal which connects the Tecino and the Po was now on our route: it is said to be the earliest in Europe, and was begun in the twelfth century. Not an inequality relieved the monotony of the straight road through Indian corn-fields, bordered by mulberry trees denuded of their leaves and holding up their desolate arms as if to excite pity. Orchard after orchard succeeded, and vineyard after vineyard, and the beautiful city of Milan beckoned us forward.

CHAPTER VII.

MILAN—THE DUOMO—THE TWO CAPITALS OF THE EMPIRE—BEAUTIES—CORSO—LAUNCE AND HIS DOG—TABLE D'HOTE—BREAD—SANTA MARIA DELLE GRAZIE—THE CENA—IL MORO—THE SFORZA—THE VISCONTI—VALENTINA OF MILAN—CHARLES OF ORLEANS—LORENZO DE' MEDICI—LOUIS 12TH.

We arrived at Milan about the middle of the day, and took up our quarters at the hotel de Gran' Bretagna, where from our pretty balcony covered with cushions and sheltered by striped drapery adorned with embroidery, we could reconnoitre the opposite mansions. Here, as at Turin, but even in greater perfection, the paving of the streets is remarkable, the manner in which the granite lines cross and recross each other is quite admirable, and the extreme cleanliness of the neat streets puts to shame both Paris and London. Indeed it is more agreeable to walk in the streets of Milan than in any city I know; not that one is altogether secure, for the foot pavement is not raised above the road, but the ranges of houses and shops, all adorned with the most beautiful balconies and graceful awnings, are so extremely attractive; and though most of the streets are narrow, all are clean. The prevailing colour of the draperies I so much admire is a rich orange-tawny striped, or embroidered in rich purple in some elegant pattern; others are of green, lilac, blue or yellow, with fringes

and vandycks and ornaments of some suitable tint, and these projecting from every window along a street, form the prettiest vistas imaginable: round the square of the Duomo they extend their rainbow hues in great beauty, as if to enhance the brilliancy of the dazzling fairy edifice at whose feet they present their many tinted pennons.

The Duomo itself!—wondrous is its effect on the beholder, who stands before it day after day in fresh admiration and astonishment at its mazes of magnificence, and it must be acknowledged generally reproaches himself for not having done this beautiful creation of the genius of ages, entire justice at the first glance.

The truth is, that like some of the restorations in the beautiful gothic churches in France, the incongruous additions to the façade of the Duomo wound the eye and distress the mind. What business have those *clumsy ten*, those unsightly doors and windows with blunted heads, in the midst of the *graceful three*, whose tracery seems worked by the fingers of fairies? Why should such deformities exist side by side with those exquisite canopies: that elaborate tabernacle work: those fretted pinnacles and lace-work borders?

As the building rises it seems to have left all of earth beneath, for its original character is only interfered with below, next to the red granite steps which lead to the chief entrance.

The form of the façade also rather disappoints the

eye; the height of the centre is grand and beautiful, but the sides of the angle slope so suddenly, and run down so near the ground, that the idea is involuntarily suggested of the long gable end of a Swiss cottage rather than the front of a majestic cathedral. I could not but wish that two large and lofty towers, as light as the rest, stood sentinels at the side to support the centre, arresting the angle about half-way and yet preserving the peculiar character which I found is common to the antient churches in this part of Italy, though no where is the favourite form carried to such an extreme as at Milan. This defect, for such I cannot help considering it, is chargeable on modern artists, who have nevertheless most beautifully followed the antique in the three charming windows which redeem the intruding Roman projections of Pelligrini, an apology for whose executed designs is inserted in one of the buttresses, but as this remorseful notice is not observed by the gazer, he must continue still to stand before the façade, if not "for ever silent," yet "for ever sad," and still lamenting that a work so perfect, in many respects, should, like the face of the sun, be obscured by spots.

As long as the traveller's good fortune permits him to remain at Milan, not a day will pass without his discovering new charms in the gorgeous Duomo, the cherished favourite of so many monarchs in so many ages, from the magnificent Visconti to the all-conquering Emperor, who erected the grand gateway of Milan, as a pendant to that of his *other* capi-

tal of subjected Europe in Paris, intending in his gigantic thought to hew a straight road over Alps, and across rivers, from one end to the other of his dominions.

No wonder Napoleon's ambition was to connect the two cities, for Paris, in his day, was not so grand as it now stands, preeminent amongst the heads of nations, and beautiful Milan must have indeed delighted his southern imagination. Milan, like Paris, it is true has greatly improved within the last twenty years, and is certainly one of the most attractive of capitals. The surrounding boulevards are strikingly fine, perhaps more so than can any where be met with, the corsos and palaces are magnificent, and the churches interesting in the extreme.

Along the noble streets, shaded with carved balconies and graceful draperies, trip pretty women in Spanish mantillas or light black lace or silk veils over their shining hair: all provided with a fan to protect their faces as they cross the piazzas, and it struck me that the men at Milan and in Lombardy in general, were a finer race than elsewhere. Courtesy is universal, and though the Milanese dialect is said to be harsh and unmusical to southern ears, to mine the language even of the lower orders sounded melodiously.

The shops are by no means handsome: almost all are small and insignificant, and the different trades have quarters appropriated to them: but the ranges of palaces in the corsei are very splendid, and those

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throughout the whole extent of the Corso del Porta Orientale are so extensive and grand, that to an unaccustomed eye there seems no end of their splendours. The fashionable drive at Milan is along this fine street and for some distance following the charming boulevards in this quarter, from whence the whole city appears as if enclosed in bowers and gardens: nothing seems close or confined throughout; all is verdure, and shade, and space, and brilliancy. A continual movement and cheerfulness exists, which struck me as remarkable; what the city may be when all the gay crowd have sought their villas on the Lakes I know not, but at the moment I saw Milan, it was full of bustle and gaiety, and nothing could be pleasanter than an evening drive on the Corso, terminated by a pause to take ices before the white pinnacles of the Duomo.

The beautiful Corso is a street worthy to have been the scene of the serenade of Sir Thurio before the Duke's Palace, where the false Proteus and the love-sick Julia are near each other without knowing it; and where, from her window, Silvia plans with Sir Eglamour to fly to Valentine at Mantua.

It was impossible not to see Launce and his dog, as at Verona, in many a passer by, and the lovers and their mistresses, creations of the Poet, amongst the gay cortege that crowded the street.

I did not, I confess, recognize the "ale house" where Launce and his friend Speed agree to adjourn to talk over home news, and where they assure

each other of "five thousand welcomes," for one "shot of five pence," but there would be no difficulty in identifying the palaces.

At the table d'hote of the Hotel at which I stayed we found numerous English, German, and American guests: one elderly Italian gentleman had devoted himself to a shy Englishman, who appeared anxious to improve his own knowledge of the beautiful language of his companion: but probably the same view actuated the latter, for he persisted in replying to every question in English. One remark he made apropos to a dish at table, entertained me,—"You English," said he, "must always feel interested about sheep and mutton, for you depend greatly on *wool:* your Chancellor, you know, sits upon a wool-sack to shew the importance you attach to it."

The English amateur of wool now resolutely changed the conversation to an eulogium on home, intoning the lines quoted by Lady Morgan, and somewhat familiar to most wanderers, beginning "Casa mia," in an accent which must have rendered them almost unintelligible to his friend, who however, after a time, caught their meaning, and subjoined in English, of similar quality: "Ah yes—you have got your song of 'Sweet Home,' just as appropriate." He then with much gesticulation went on to favour his mortified pupil with *his* version of the popular song, accompanying the words *sotto voce* with an improvised air.

Several of the guests at table were perseveringly

talking Murray, and an English family, consisting of a father, mother, and six daughters, from five to fifteen, were recounting the adventures they had met with, during a sojourn of three years in Italy. Taken in general, however, it appeared that there had been fewer travellers on the Continent this year than usual, owing to the coldness of the spring, and in Switzerland it was rare, we afterwards found, to meet with any adventurous enough to dare the perils of republican discontent.

The profusion of ice handed round at dinner to cool the water, announced the habits of a southern climate agreeably, and the weather at this time rendered such a luxury peculiarly grateful. Both at Milan, and at every other Italian town I visited, I observed that the style of living is equal, and in some respects superior to that of Paris, and far beyond that in the provincial towns of France. The bread is admirable, approaching the best in England, and better than that of Spain, which it resembles, but is closer though as white, it is even superior in some places to the Swiss bread, of which the natives of the Cantons are so justly proud.

Although every church in Milan is full of interest and teeming with beauties both of painting and sculpture, yet that which must absorb all attention for a time, is Santa Maria delle Grazie. I had been struck with the peculiar exterior form of this church on first arriving at Milan: its ornaments of moulded brick and terra-cotta were unlike anything I had be-

fore seen, and appeared to me singular and admirable. The fine cupola is grand and imposing, and the whole church is curious and remarkable; but I could not fix my attention on the valuable frescoes of Gaudenzio Ferrari, nor enter into the merits of the works of other great artists, dimly visible in a gloomy light, so anxious was I to arrive at the refectory where the greatest marvel of art, the immortal Cenacolo of Leonardo da Vinci is still fading from the sustaining walls.

So delicate, so shadowy, so fragile appears this vision of a picture, that one is awed on entering the silent hall which contains it, and cannot help fearing that, like a faint rainbow in the clouds, it will disappear from sight while the eye is yet seeking to trace its evanescent forms. I was fortunately alone in the large apartment, at the end of which the divine company look through the veil of time and destruction from their throne.

I placed myself on a chair in the centre of the room, and fixing my gaze attentively on the marvellous group, waited patiently till its realities should become apparent. At first all is indistinct, except the general drawing of the groups, the architecture, and the faint sky beyond, but in a short time the eye gets accustomed to the effort of deciphering, and at length all appears sufficiently intelligible.

One head, one face, one attitude, one expression then comes forcibly upon the sight and sinks deeply into the mind till every thought and feeling is ab-

sorbed in wonder at the power which could represent so sublime a figure in so sublime a manner. Little less than inspiration seems requisite to have produced such a result as the great painter's dreams and aspirations at last achieved. I had heard and read all that has been said on the subject of this picture, but when I found myself before it, I recollected nothing, I was aware of nothing but the deep feeling of engrossing admiration which took entire possession of my mind.

I cannot believe that any attempted restoration, any retouching or cleaning or scraping can have materially injured this magnificently beautiful head: whatever may have been done to it, no trace remains but of the original idea; it is true, it is only a shadow gleaming through the cloud of decay; there are no vivid colours, no marked features, no striking character; all is calm, and cold, and pale, and *even:* the faintest tints in the sky as the last gleam of sunset fade into transparent grey, are all that pourtray that heavenly countenance, full of benevolence, tenderness, pity and sorrow: the latter feeling is perhaps the most vividly expressed, but so delicate is the combination, that it is hardly possible not to imagine that a momentary change comes over the face as one gazes, and that the perfect features are now more tender, now more pitying, now more full of regret for the incorrigible wickedness and ingratitude of man.

In the glorious serenity of that countenance is

beheld the history of the pardoned Magdalen, the reproof of the self-sufficient Pharisee; there may be read, as in a scroll, lessons of charity and peace so ill followed, though so often cited by erring men, who, while they respect the gentle words of that divine tongue, allow the spirit to evaporate. There are patience, and forbearance, and endurance—there are knowledge, and power, and prescience—there is deep grief for treachery and crime, and, above all, there is pity and forgiveness. I should have thought it impossible that any picture could convey such wondrous meaning, and could express so startling a history, but it is no exaggeration to say that such is its effect. No one can gaze on it without awe and tears; no one, having once seen it, can forget the strong impression that inspired work created—that face will haunt the memory for ever, and the recollection of it will inspire consolation and hope.

If all the pictures in Catholic churches were painted in so miraculous a manner, one might excuse enthusiasts for believing that there was more in them than mere human art, but I never beheld a head that produced an equal admiration in my mind; all other pictures seem of earth, but this of heaven itself,

Even the very humble, unadorned hall, on the wall of which it is seen, is pleasing: such a work requires no adjunct, should have no adornment. The picture is defended by a wooden gallery, which is approached

by a ladder: the curious can therefore see it closely, but the effect is then almost lost. Here and there partial daubings can be detected in the minor figures, but I think most of the heads have been respected. One circumstance struck me, namely, that no copy or print I have ever seen gives me so much as an idea of the original. Most of these make the long board and white table cloth conspicuous, and this had always distressed my eye, and caused me to question the great artist's judgment, if such were really the case. Instead of this, you may look for some minutes at the picture before you observe these minor details, conspicuous as they might naturally be from filling up the front of the piece. The chief personage in the group attracts the attention at once, and when the eye can quit that object it takes in the other heads in succession, and at the last, in observing the ensemble, you become aware that there is a table covered with a white cloth, over which a grey shadow is thrown, which keeps it completely under, but the transparent white, thus shaded, serves to render more etherial the character of the scene.

It is thus that I was impressed while I looked on this immortal work of art, (would it were so indeed!) and I really believe that I gained nothing from enthusiasm; for, surprised into oblivion, I had so entirely forgotten all I had ever heard of its beauties, that it burst upon me as a thing unknown before: I do not imagine either that its indistinct appearance

caused me to fill up defective portions with imaginary beauties; but I believe that I saw the picture as it was, and as Leonardo intended it should appear. I can even credit the assertion that he never entirely completed the glorious head of the Saviour, not having reached his own ideas of the required sublimity, but I think he went as far as mortal pencil could, and has nearly arrived at the acme of perfection and truth.

I do not feel the least inclined to doubt the truth of the tale which represents Napoleon sitting on the ground before this picture, and writing in his pocket book, which he placed on his knee, an order for the removal of the military from the place where the Cenacolo made the walls holy.

The paint is still scaling off in some parts of the picture, but the faces are in general clear: as the monks cut a door through the wall, no doubt much damage was done which could not be repaired; but I am inclined to hope that the medium employed by Leonardo for the faces was not the same as that he used for the draperies, and that, although these may be effaced, the chief beauties of his picture may remain. If the whole has really been repainted the modern colours must have faded or scaled off, while the original imperishable shadow still stains the favoured wall, and defies the efforts of ignorance and presumption.

Santa Maria delle Grazie was begun in 1464, but

not-completed till thirty years afterwards. Ludovico Sforza, called il Moro, and his wife Beatrice were liberal contributors to its revenues. Her device was a sieve held by a hand on either side, and the motto, "*Ti à mi, e mi à ti:*" this unpoetical emblem was embroidered on some splendid hangings with which she adorned the high altar. These and her tomb have long since disappeared, together with all the glories of the last Sforza, which ended in the dungeons of Loches.

Sad were the contrasts he experienced between the splendours of his ducal reign, his flight, his disguises, his capture and the sad journey to his prison home, when, it is recorded, many of his subjects whom he had injured, followed the train of his exulting enemies, shouting and reviling him at whose frown they once trembled. His hair is said to have turned grey in a single night "with sudden fears."

The Sforza and the Visconti governed Milan for two centuries, and it is difficult to decide as to which of those powerful families deserves the palm of superior tyranny. Il Moro's fate was richly merited: his young nephew was but seven years of age when his father was assassinated, and the savage uncle instantly resolved to appropriate his dukedom. He invaded the territory of Milan, got the young Duke and his mother, Bona of Savoy, into his power and kept them prisoners for the remainder of their lives,

till the usual close by poison released the young Duke, after eighteen years confinement; he breathed his last in the castle of Pavia, and Il Moro was undisputed sovereign.

Galeazzo Maria, the father of this ill-fated young Prince, was guilty of cruelties even unknown to his brother: his heart was puffed up with pride, and he foresaw not the early downfall of his race. At a grand banquet, given at Christmas, the Duke, exulting in his state and power, looked proudly round upon his assembled nobles, and arrogantly observed, as he counted eighteen members of his family all young and strong and flourishing and gay: "The House of Sforza will last for ages to come."

The next day the assassin's dagger told another tale, and the proud Sforza lay in his palace murdered.

There is a fanciful derivation of the name of Sforza, which supposes it to have arisen from the following circumstance. The name of the first chief was Muzio Attendolo, who fought under the banners of Alberico da Barbiano: on an occasion when he thought his share of the booty gained was unjustly withheld, he shewed great violence, and his captain exclaimed: "Ha! are you going to use *force* with me, as you have done against others?—the name of *Sforza* would methinks suit you better than that of Muzio." From this time he adopted the appellation. Probably, however, the name arose from the *strength* and valour of the man who first ennobled the family,

the same Muzio or Giacomuzzo, as he is indifferently called, who is said to have been ploughing in a field of Cotignola, when some troops marched by. His spirit was roused at seeing the French adherents of the Duke of Orleans—no other than Charles the Poet—treading the soil of his native land. He cast his plough, some say 'his hatchet,' up into a tree and waited for an omen: 'if,' he thought, 'this remains where I have thrown it I will take it as a proof that I am destined to a career of arms, if it falls I will resume my agricultural labours.'

The plough or hatchet was entangled in the branches and did not descend, and Attendolo abandoned his fields: his courage and promptitude, his talents and energy won him a way to fame, and the name of Sforza.

The Sforza had been preceded by the Visconti; the first of which family that reigned in Milan was Matteo, called the Great: overcoming the enmity of the Torriani, his ancient foes, Matteo established his power for a time, but a struggle afterwards ensued in which the Torriani got the better, and Matteo and his son Galeazzo were compelled to leave the field to their foes. Matteo retired to Peschiera, and his son to Ferrara. While the exiled prince was thus reduced to a private station, Guido Torriani, who was then lord of Milan, sent him an insulting message, desiring to know how he passed his time and when he hoped to return to Milan. The messenger found him walking on the banks of the Adige, and on

hearing these questions he turned to him calmly and replied: "You see how I live, amusing myself and accommodating myself to my fortune: with respect to the time of my returning to Milan, I look forward to it when the sins of the Torriani shall be greater than those of the Visconti."

In 1311, Henry of Luxembourg was crowned with the iron crown, and on the occasion summoned the rival families to the foot of his throne, exhorting them to live in friendship. A seeming reconciliation took place but it wrought evil to the peacemaker, against whom a conspiracy was formed, in which both parties joined, and, in the end, Matteo Visconti once more triumphed and became ruler as before. His son succeeded him, but his health had suffered so much during a confinement of five years, that he died early, leaving a son who possessed more virtues than those who had gone before him. He was so much beloved by his subjects that when he died it is said three thousand persons put on mourning.

Another Galeazzo Visconti, lord of Pavia, married his daughter Violante to Lionel Duke of Clarence, and thus connected the family with England.

Napoleon's usurpation of the sovereignty of Milan for France was only one of a series. The monarchs of that ambitious nation had frequently endeavoured to establish a claim to a country, which Nature seems to have so removed by its rocky barriers from all others, that it might seem secure; yet the greater

the obstacles the more resolute has been the attempt, and the prize has for many ages been hotly contested.

The marriage of the fair and faithful Valentina, daughter of Giovanni Galeazzo Visconti, with the Duke of Orleans, gave France a claim to Milan through her, which Charles VIII. Louis XII. and Francis I. enforced, but too resolutely.

The amiable Valentina's fate was most melancholy, her husband murdered, and her two sons persecuted, good reason had she to adopt the mournful motto which afterwards distinguished her.

"Rien ne m'est plus—plus ne m'est rien!"

If fame could heal the wounds of the heart she might have been consoled, but to that she was no longer sensible, for death had closed her career before her illustrious son Charles of Orleans, the first poet of his time, made the world musical with his deathless lays. She knew not of his celebrity, and she wept not his captivity in England of twenty-five years.

Many a time has the beautiful city of Milan been the scene of gorgeous magnificence, and many have been the honoured guests which its mighty Dukes have received with splendour. Lorenzo de Medici, in the lifetime of his father Piero, came here in great state to stand sponsor for him to the eldest son of Galeazzo Sforza.

A letter from hence from Lorenzo to his wife

Clarice is interesting in its extreme simplicity and affection.

'I arrived here in safety and am in good health. This I believe will please thee better than anything else except my return: at least so I judge from my own desire to be once more with thee. Associate as much as possible with my father and my sister. I shall make all possible speed to return to thee, for it appears a thousand years till I see thee again. Pray to God for me. If thou want anything from this place write in time.

From Milan, 22nd July, 1469.

Thy LORENZO, DE' MEDICI.'

When the sponsor departed his gifts were so splendid, that they excited the wish of the receivers that he should perform that duty again. He gave to the Duchess a gold necklace with a diamond that cost about three thousand ducats.

Louis XII. of France in 1507 visited Milan in state, after the reduction of revolted Genoa. He was received with infinite honour and pomp, and at a grand festival the King condescended to appear in the character of a dancer, opening the ball with the Marchioness of Mantua. Two cardinals kept him in countenance, and laid aside their gravity on the occasion: probably at the period such gaiety

"was not held a stain."

Certainly these dancing cardinals were more innocent characters than many churchmen, their contemporaries, for instance Cæsar Borgia and his father, Pope Alexander VI.!

Louis however did not keep possession of his

Milanese possessions, being altogether driven out by the Emperor Maximilian and the intrigues of Pope Julius II.; by whom the son of Ludovico il Moro was restored to the Duchy: notwithstanding all the exploits of the chevalier Bayard and so many noble warriors. One of the causes, it is said, of Louis's failure was owing to the defection of the mercenary Swiss, who, always ready to sell their arms, could never be depended on. The king had offended them by an incautious speech which his enemies had strongly impressed on their memories: when they had demanded an increase of their pensions, Louis had exclaimed contemptuously: "What do these paltry mountaineers expect? do they take me for their tributary or their cashier?"

Another glorious triumph over conquered Milan was effected by Francis I., after the disastrous battle of Marignan, which made him master of the whole Milanese. This magnificent prince made his entry into Milan in the ducal robes, at the head of 1,800 horse and 24,000 foot, accompanied by five princes of the blood. To him the magistrates made as many promises and shewed as many honours as they had done to his predecessors, and as they were ready to do to whatever conqueror entered their walls.

David l'Enfant recounts that the arts of magic were employed on the occasion of the war in the Milanese between Francis I. and the Emperor Charles V., by which means all the king's

proceedings were known at Paris the night after any remarkable event. This was effected by means of one of those wondrous glasses which must at that time have been as useful as an atmospheric railway. They were said to be the invention of no less a personage than the philosopher Pythagoras, and their use is thus described :—

"The moon being at full, somebody writes on a looking-glass any thing that he has a mind to, *with blood*, and holds it against the moon: a person at a distance who has been duly apprized, will be able to read the communication in another looking-glass, which also reflects the moon."

This absurd belief was encouraged for several centuries: and believed like that account of a king of Alexandria, who is said to have fixed one of these glasses to a column, and by its means set fire to all his enemy's ships, which, passing along the seas, were reflected in it.

Nostrodamus, the famous astrologer, did not neglect this means of deceit, and contrived to make his dupes believe that they saw the future in his looking-glasses.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LAZARETTO — HOSPITALS — MILANO LA GRANDE — ARCO DELLA PACE—SAN LORENZO—SAN AMBROGIO—THE PALLIO—THE BRAZEN SERPENT—SAN EUSTORGIO—SAN PIETRO MARTIRE—THE DUOMO—NAPOLEON AND JOSEPHINE—EXTERIOR—COPERTA DE' FIGINI—PIAZZA DE' MERCADANTI—AMBROSIAN LIBRARY—MSS.—BEMBO—BRERA.

One of the most remarkable buildings belonging to Milan is the Lazaretto, close to the Porta Orientale. There is something exceedingly striking and impressive in beholding this place, the refuge for hundreds of unfortunate beings cast out of the great city, and herding together, all under the ban of a frightful malady which separated them from their kind. Here extend for more than a quarter of a mile on each side of the square, the long arcades where the wretched creatures paced with mournful steps, musing on past pleasures and past hopes, and mourning the loss, perhaps, of all whom they held dear.

The Lazaretto, still standing entire, is a strange memento of the miseries of the middle ages, and the sight of it takes one back to the times when the ill-fated Ludovico il Moro and his Duchess Beatrice with benevolent care provided an asylum for their distressed and outcast subjects.

Close to the magnificent city, amongst the acacia groves of its beautiful boulevards, removed but a few paces from the brilliant Corso, where all the gaiety of Milan is assembled evening after evening, the gloomy Lazar-house rises, like a giant skeleton, as if to remind the young, the thoughtless and the vicious of their mortality, and of

"all the ills that flesh is heir to."

Before the fifteenth century had closed, this enormous refuge was completed, and for several ages after, it served as a receptacle of disease in its most appalling form. Nothing material appears changed in it, except that the ditch is dried up, and there are entrances to the ranges of houses from without, which of course was a convenience carefully avoided in the time of plague. The inner entrances, next to the great square, remain, and the little tenements thus enjoy thorough air. Artizans of various occupations now live in this quarter, which forms a suburb to the city: all is clean and neat within, and the once plague-tainted arcades now afford a pleasant walk to the inhabitants. It is built chiefly of brick, and is in excellent preservation.

There are several grand hospitals in the town: that called the Ospedale Maggiore is magnificent. It was founded in the middle of the fifteenth century, by Francisco Sforza and his duchess Bianca Maria, and was formerly a palace of the Visconti. The exterior is a fine specimen of antique architecture, of the richest kind: the façade is covered with terra

cotta ornaments; heads and flowers and foliage in beautiful profusion adorn the lofty walls, and the rows of fine pointed arches and windows.

We visited the kitchens of this fine establishment, and listened to the boasts and exultation of the individual who exhibited every thing, and assured us there was no such place for the sick in the world. Although certainly convenient there might be less slovenliness, and the arrangements are not as good as in some more modern establishments of the same kind, where there is greater space, and where experience has helped to improvement. A ward through which I passed struck me as ill-ventilated and dark, although the room was very large.

No less than fourteen hundred sick are accommodated in this hospital, which is liberally supported by the pious and benevolent Milanais. The portraits of benefactors are hung up under the porticos of the interior square every two years for public admiration, and at the time we visited the place they were exhibited in full force. There is a singular and rather invidious arrangement respecting these pictures: the donor of a large sum of money has the privilege of appearing before the world full length, but if he have not opened his purse so widely as his neighbours he is to be known only by his bust. As works of art the portraits composing this gallery do not rank very high.

The more modern hospital of the Fate-bene-Sorelle is appropriated to females only, and is a beautiful

establishment, supported and endowed by charitable ladies of rank. The wards are spacious and lofty, and scrupulously neat and clean. I observed that most of the sick were young, and there was something inexpressibly touching, and at the same time consoling, in seeing these sufferers in their pretty neat white beds attended by the quiet sisters: all had circular green fans, but though the day was intensely hot the long large apartment in which the invalids lay was cool and pleasant. One very handsome girl followed us with her beautiful bright eyes as we walked slowly along, the delicate colour on her cheek and her fine complexion set off by pencilled dark eyebrows, and luxuriant braids of shining black hair, all seemed to speak of a brief existence: she appeared in pain and uttered a groan of anguish as I passed, which made me hasten away, heart-struck from a scene of suffering which I had no power of alleviating.

But there are sights in Milan able to chase away sadness and afford amusement for many a day. The churches alone are a continuous treat, for they have both modern splendour to attract and antiquity to interest. The palaces, the galleries, the public walks have each peculiar attractions, so that a traveller who is not hurried—and it is always a misfortune when he is so—may pass several weeks most agreeably at Milan. I was able to allow only days, and that brief time was not sufficient to do justice to the beautiful city: every hour, however, of my stay was

most excitingly filled up, and I beheld so much that delighted me, that when I look back I can scarcely believe that so many agreeable impressions could have been crowded into a space so small.

"Only methought the time too swiftly past,
And ev'ry *hour* I feared would be the last."

Milano la grande no longer, as of old, echoes to the sound of the smith's anvil, preparing those famous hauberks and blades which many a knight was proud to wear in honour of his lady love and in defence of his sovereign lord. The huge defences which once stood against her foes have disappeared, and beautiful groves and gardens smile where they threatened: what Milan was in times of yore is seen in a few dilapidated towers, which still raise their rugged heads above the glories of the French Piazza d'armi. These are the last memories of the magnificent Ducal palace, which in the fourteenth century a Visconti erected, and in the fifteenth a mob destroyed, to be again rebuilt by a new tyrant, and moulder gradually away in the course of time, which

"makes all things even."

The enormous square which this palace-castle occupied, with all its fortifications, to keep the enemy at home and abroad in awe, was destined by the French conquerors of Italy to be the scene of a revival of antique customs. Here was to have been a Forum, and Milan would have been a younger Rome under the auspices of the classical republicans, who panted to emulate the glories of the

ancients, whom they rejoiced to imitate both in their virtues and their vices. Here is still the arena, the naumachia, grandly designed and imposing, even though a failure. Thirty thousand spectators can still assemble in its enclosure to gaze on some spectacle, perhaps as worthy of regard as the shows which pleased the ancients.

The Arco della Pace, was originally to have been called The Arch of the Simplon, and was intended by the Imperial and too ambitious projector, as the second of the many which should give him entrance from his chief seat at Paris into the Italian cities which he had brought to his feet. It has a good effect, and though much less lofty, is perhaps as fine as that in the Champs Elysées: the details, if defective, do not intrude on the eye of the passer by, and the whole is splendid, majestic, and in keeping with the scenes around.

Of all the monuments which once filled Milan, very slight vestiges remain: the most remarkable is the range of pillars before the church of San Lorenzo. I came upon them suddenly as we drove down the street, and the appearance of sixteen tall, solemn Corinthian columns, standing in the way, amidst the bustle of a crowded street, and guarding the approach to a temple dedicated to a worship which was foreign to their day, is very startling. I walked between them and round them, examined their mutilated fluted surfaces and gazed up at their venerable capitals, wondering how it was possible that "time, war, flood

and fire" should have spared them to be "a marvel and a secret" down to the present day.

The church still exhibits some columns which connect the building with those without, but strangely are they distributed: one fine frieze is turned on its side, and forms part of a door-way; capitals are reversed and serve for pedestals; pillars are placed across as supports, and no regard whatever has been shewn to the original destination of the carved stones, which have been merely selected to save trouble and cost in the reconstruction of the often destroyed edifice, which replaced the temple of Hercules and the magnificent baths named in his honour.

The great Basilica of St. Ambrogio is full of riches and splendour: porphyry columns, gold, azure, silver and enamel dazzle the eyes as these treasures gleam through the dim arcades, and, touched by the sun-light, shine like faith in the midst of gloom. The cypress-wood doors, closed by the undaunted Saint against a tyrant Emperor, are still to be seen, or, if not the identical, still venerable relics which represent the gates which once guarded the entrance of the Duomo, and were transferred to this church, a temple dedicated to the Saint whose noble action won him immortal honour. They are defended from the clamorous devotion of the pious by iron bars, and present fine specimens of alto-relievo carving: much of the iron work round appears as old as the date given to them, and the whole is looked upon as sacred and able to work miracles even now.

Strange is it, after all the fortunes of Milan, so often lost and won, to behold the high altar still radiant with that far famed ornament, wrought by the most cunning hands that ever handled the delicate implements of the goldsmith's craft.

Wondrous is it to stand on the steps of the altar where the bodies of three saints repose, and to trace by an imperfect light, the exquisite patterns, involved and mazy, of the golden plates which case the precious shrine. Countless are the gems of every hue which lie embedded in their carved frames and surround the pictured histories of the saints' lives, minutely related by the inspired goldsmith Wolvinus, who executed this unrivalled work in the beginning of the ninth century.

This Pallio, held sacred for so many centuries, and respected in times when gold, silver, and jewels, were valued for "as much money as they'd bring," escaped destruction from age to age, and got through those perilous times when most of the treasures of Italy were torn from their recesses, and throughout Europe shrines and altars were sought only to be stripped, in order to swell the coffers of rapacious conquerors. It is as exquisite in imagery and execution, as if the hands of the cunning Aholiab and Bezaleel had been employed: scarcely could those "wise-hearted men," have shewn more skill in adorning the altar of the true God, inspired as they were with understanding and knowledge "in all manner of workmanship,"

"to devise curious works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in the cutting of stones to set them, and to work all manner of work of the engraver, and of the cunning workman."

The approach to the church is imposing, by a vestibule bordered with antique pillars: on the walls are crowded inscribed stones, saved from the wrecks of the former fabrics, which stood through so many ages on this spot,—some rude half effaced frescoes still stain the surface, but their subject can scarcely be traced: a sepulchral urn of a supposed warrior of ancient fame stands close by the fine pillars of the mysterious portal, which gives entrance into this remarkable edifice, a perfect museum of marbles, altars, chapels, tombs, and frescoes.

On a porphyry pillar, writhing in strange contortions, the Brazen Serpent of the Desert attracts the eye, long believed to be the identical image named in Scripture as set up by Moses, according to divine commandment, to stay the torments of the people who had dared to rebel, and were suffering for their crime.

What must have been the effect produced on the minds of those who, gazing on this piece of bronze, doubtless a talisman of immense antiquity, could allow their bewildered imaginations to credit the fact that they stood before that fiery serpent, which Moses made "of brass, and set it upon a pole, and it came to pass that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived."

Some wise English traveller had insisted to the exhibitor of this brazen serpent that it could not be that of Moses, "because he had broken that image in the desert," confounding it with the *molten calf*, which the lawgiver destroyed; and the poor custode was, when I visited the church, in so much tribulation at the recent information of this learned Theban, that he did not venture to relate to us its pretensions.

I had heard our compatriot boasting at the table-d'hote the day before of the notable manner in which he had "put down" the guide of St. Ambrogio, whose knowledge of Scripture history not being probably superior to that of his critic, we found so "chop-fallen."

Beautiful is the chapel of St. Satiro, where, beneath a cupola of gold and mosaic, and surrounded by full length figures of saints, wrought in the same precious materials, are said to repose the ashes of St. Ambrogio's brother, whose name of Satiro is so startling to a Christian ear.

St. Ambrogio's marble chair stands in the centre of the Byzantine choir, where gold and mosaic glitter in beautiful profusion. All the other marble seats, which formerly were ranged in order here, have disappeared, and are replaced by fine carved stalls of extreme delicacy. I was shewn some very exquisite manuscripts by the youthful sacristan, whose pleasing intelligent countenance spoke, I thought, more of delight than devotion as he

exhibited the treasures of the church and pointed out the beauties of the charming miniatures glowing with gold and fresh colours, which he seemed as much gratified to display as I to gaze upon.

It was not a little amusing to remark the pleasure evidently shared by the assistants who shewed us the Pallio, as they removed plank after plank which defended the sacred treasure, and exclaimed in admiration at its glories, which, one after the other, shone brightly forth: singular does it seem to behold men leaping on the holy altars at these exhibitions, turning their backs to sacred objects, and irreverently dragging off coverings for the edification of heretics who pay five francs to the church funds for the treat which their curiosity obtains.

An inexplicable monument is the pulpit with its eagle's wings, and equally so the sarcophagus beneath it; both are extremely curious and interesting, but the mind is puzzled to understand the meaning of the figures and scrolls, and types and enigmas in bronze and stone about them.

San Eustorgio is one of the most interesting churches of the many in Milan, and is as old as the fourth century. Here stands a large sarcophagus, which once contained the bodies of the three Kings whose throne of jewels is now at Cologne: and here is a beautiful shrine of San Pietro Martire, who was accustomed, from a pulpit on the outside of this church, to preach to the people on the crimes of

heretics and schismatics. I could not help smiling at the mistaken zeal of one of my party who, confounding this celebrated persecuting Saint with Peter Martyr the famous divine of Florence, imagined it becoming, as a good Protestant, to seek for his picture and his chapel wherever they were to be seen.

I was not at first aware of the cause of this enthusiasm, which a little surprised me, and on inquiry, discovered that the Romish saint, who was one of the most furious enemies of new doctrines and advocated every severity of the Inquisition against those who differed from his own standard of belief, and who moreover flourished in the thirteenth century, was receiving honours and respect from a good Protestant, in consequence of a blunder, which turned him into his namesake of the sixteenth, who adopted the appellation of *Martyr*, because the church of the saint stood near his paternal mansion, the name of his family being Vermilius: it was not the fault of Queen Mary that this seceder from Popery was not really a martyr, and he probably would have been equally ready to inflict the same fate on his persecuting compatriot, had the power been given him, and had he lived in his time, so far from Christianity is the rage of zealous reformers on both sides of the important and ill understood question.

This strange error once corrected, I heard no more of San Pietro Martire, and even the famous

picture by Titian at Venice, was afterwards unnoticed by his awakened admirer.

San Vittore al Corpo, its fine stucco ornaments, its enamelled cupolas, and the bold bas-reliefs of its stalls, offer much to admire; some beautiful embroidery is shewn worked by the delicate fingers of a lady benefactress, and is worthy of the vociferous commendations of the zealous custode.

The lightness and brilliancy of the Duomo, to which the stranger again and again returns after visiting the other churches, hardly prepares one for the solemn grandeur of the interior, which, though less impressive than some gothic cathedrals I have seen, is yet commanding and splendid to an extraordinary degree, from its great and uninterrupted height. The restored windows of beautiful painted glass, are so admirable that they can scarcely be recognised as a work of modern art: all is grand and large and appropriate in this cathedral, and if there is something more antique required to satisfy the mind in such a place, it is impossible not to acknowledge the merit and beauty of all it contains: the marbles, the bronzes, the pavement, the roof, the pillars, the shrines, are all costly and splendid, and in good taste and keeping.

In the fine subterranean chapel of San Carlo Borromeo, is the most interesting exhibition of the kind I ever beheld, though in general, the gorgeous shrines of saints do not excite any particular gratification in my mind. Here, however, all is so rich,

so beautiful, that it cannot but please. The walls are blazing with silver and golden carvings, in alto-relievo, representing incidents in the saint's life, and precious are the gems which glitter in profusion round each compartment of the history. We witnessed the whole process of the exhibition of the saint's body: the talismanic number of francs having rendered any pious scruples unnecessary, and San Carlo appeared to our eyes in his crystal shrine, as hideous a spectacle of withered and blackened humanity as could be seen, surrounded as he lies with all the gorgeous vanities of the world, in blazing robes stiff with jewels and gold, with all the emblems of power and pomp, and state, and wealth, that ambition could covet—there grins the fleshless skull, there glare the eyeless sockets, there moulder the darkened cheeks, and there reposes the brainless head, mitered and crowned, banded and starred—a thing to shudder at and turn from with awe and disgust, in spite of the blazing candles lighted in its honour (or rather in honour of the money of the curious), and the heaps of wealth spread out, above, below, and underneath the body of the good man whom popular devotion made a saint.

Round the chapel of the saint, in glass cases, are innumerable treasures in silver and gold; amongst them is shewn a piece of workmanship of great beauty, executed by Caradosso, of whom even the jealous Cellini, who was his contemporary, speaks

with respect, when describing the fashionable medals, which noblemen wore in their caps, and which were fashioned by the first artists. "I made," says Cellini, "several things of this sort, but found such jobs very difficult, the celebrated artist named Caradosso would not take less than one hundred crowns for one of them, because they contained a variety of figures." He adds, that having made one, which, being compared to the work of Caradosso was preferred, he was so much gratified at "the happiness of making an approach to the excellence of so great a master," that the honour was remuneration enough for him, and he asked no other.

This work of Caradosso is a Pax covered with figures of extreme beauty and delicacy.

Many and strange have been the scenes which have taken place beneath the magnificent roof of this beautiful cathedral, from the time that the pious and resolute St. Ambrogio refused admittance within its walls, to an emperor stained with recent crime: but seldom was there one more extraordinary or unlooked for than that which startled Europe in our own times.

It was in this church that Napoleon, the great soldier of Fortune, who then stood on the topmost height of the wheel, and made it pause beneath his powerful foot, was crowned king of Italy.

Glittering with countless diamonds, the centre of a beautiful and brilliant group, the fascinating Josephine and the enchanting Eliza looked proudly

on the pageant, of which they formed a leading feature, while the object of their love and exultation paced along the majestic aisles of the Cathedral of conquered Milan, wearing an imperial, and bearing a regal crown. After him followed a train of nobles and heroes with the regalia of the mighty Charlemagne, his second in glory, and the respected cardinal, whose mind was not allowed to wander back to the time when priests commanded emperors.

No hand but his own was worthy to crown such a monarch, as then placed the miraculous iron circlet on his own brows, and no words but those of the legend attached to that circle itself were, he thought, appropriate to the occasion:

"God has given, woe to him who touches it."

Leaving the unnumbered beauties of the interior of the Duomo, I mounted the tower which led to the outside, and found myself soon climbing amongst flying buttresses, pinnacles, fairy staircases, winding ways, galleries, arcades, groves of statues, gardens of flowers and foliage, cupolas, vistas, bridges and temples, like a pilgrim wandering in an enchanted dream. Beautiful faces, grotesque figures, angels, monkeys, saints and bishops, seemed nodding to me from every projection; the three thousand figures of the majestic Duomo were round me: a forest of fretted pinnacles shone out in the bright sunlight against a sky of cloudless blue; the mighty city with all its palaces

and domes lay glittering below, and new boughs and branches and arches and festoons of sculptured stone still rose in pyramids above my head, till I became dazzled and giddy with the wonderful profusion of unrivalled beauty into whose mazes I had strayed.

All Lombardy seems spread out at the foot of this unapproachably beautiful fabric, and it is fitting that the eternal snows of the gigantic Alps should alone bound the view. A sudden shower which began to patter amongst the sculptured foliage shining in the gleaming sun, made me pause beneath one of the fretted arches, and a low growl of thunder at a distance warned me not to await our usual evening storm in that exalted position. I therefore slowly descended, revisiting the winged angels and draperied saints who had greeted me on my upward way, and found myself on the marble steps of the Cathedral, opposite the piazza of the Coperto de' Figini, scarcely conscious where I stood or in what company I had been.

The arcades which extend on one side of the irregular square before the Cathedral form one of the few antique remains of Milan, and it is to be hoped that modern improvement will not do away with those few venerable arches, even though they may appear less gay and brilliant than altogether agrees with the smart cafés near.

Another vestage of antiquity, mixed up with new buildings, is the Piazza de' Mercadanti, where still

stands, so beautified and remodelled as to be scarcely recognizable, the Palazzo della Ragione, common to most Italian towns, where the magistrates and judges were in old times accustomed to meet.

When I first went into the square it was echoing with the music of a military band, which veiled fair ones and lounging beaux were pausing to listen to: we stopped like the rest, and I looked round in admiration of the singular scene. In the centre stood the Palazzo, guarded at one façade by a mounted figure, of a strangely accoutred warrior, who is no other than the Podesta Oldrado Grosso himself, saved from the wreck of ornament and rescued from amongst the fallen pillars of the palace, to be placed amidst new stone and brick in his original place of honour. I could not read the inscription beneath his effigy, which records his pious deeds in extirpating heresy as far as in him lay: but his appearance is such as I remember to have seen in an old manuscript romance of his time, the thirteenth century, where a knight is represented armed cap-à-pié, without a vestige of humanity left to his figure or head, yet the romancer assures his reader that his hero wore a suit of armour "which became him mightily."

Opposite this figure is a building supported by many pointed and circular arches, and very curious in its construction: in the centre projects a heavy stone balcony, called the *ringhiera*, and all along are the shields of different magistrates of Milan: the serpent of the Visconti is conspicuous, and the tra-

ditionary *half-fleecy sow** attacked by an eagle is dimly distinguished in one of the stone tablets.

This is called the Loggia degli Orsii, and is as old as the fourteenth century.

On the other side of the square is a very elegant building of much more modern date, the Palazzo della Citta. On the whole the appearance of this square is infinitely more remarkable than any other in Milan, and all its old recollections of the middle ages are apparently concentrated in this spot.

I frequently returned to this ancient place, and could not help wishing that Milan had preserved elsewhere more of her original character: for there is in general as much of French as Italian in the manners and customs: the booksellers' shops are filled with yellow paper-covered novels from Paris and London, and Italian classics find no place upon the shelves. The jewellers' shops are poor and mean, and I was much disappointed at the display of trinkets, which seem only fit for wearers of the humblest class: the prices asked and taken of an English customer are widely at variance, and the presumptuous demands of the Jewish sellers are really amusing in their impertinence. The immense

* On the walls of Milan formerly was seen frequently sculptured the monster from which it is said to have derived its name, half sow, half sheep.

Ad Mœnia Gallis
Condita *lanigeræ* suis ostentantia pellum.—*Claud.*
Et quæ lanigeræ de sue nomen habet.—*Sidon. Apoll.*

quantity of painted fans on the stalls was all I observed which seemed characteristic of Italy; as every female carries one, the supply must necessarily be extensive.

I could not quit Milan without asking to see at the Ambrosian Library the handwriting of Petrarch on the Virgil adorned with miniatures by Simone Memmi. The notes are written with infinite neatness and precision, and I endeavoured to decipher them with great interest.

There are many pictures of value in the Ambrosian Gallery, and a school of design containing excellent studies. Several portraits by Leonardo are admirable; one in particular, a small head, struck me as full of simplicity and truth. It represents a young woman with features somewhat irregular but very pleasing: fine full eyes, a short expressive upper lip, round chin and delicate cheek. The soft hair is negligently braided, and covered with a transparent cap, trimmed with pearls and fastened by a ribbon tied carelessly at the side, which goes across the forehead, and is ornamented from space to space by a rich jewel with a pendant pearl; a necklace of large pearls encircles the throat, and a magnificent broach confines the rich robe.

I believe this to be a portrait of Beatrice d'Este, the young Duchess of Milan, who died in giving birth to an infant, and whose monument is in the Certosa near Pavia. As there is no catalogue and the custode was busily engaged in explaining *à sa*

manière, the other pictures to some gaping groups of strangers, I could only guess at the subjects of those before which I paused.

The pride of the collection is the famous cartoon for the fresco of the School of Athens, by Raphael, which it would be worth a young artist's while to cross the Alps to study.

Some sculpture of considerable interest is scattered in different parts of the building. In an open corridor stand several fine casts of Rodolfo Schadow's works, which exist in the magnificent gallery at Chatsworth; a winged spirit, angel or cupid, crowned, is extremely lovely, and the exquisitely beautiful Filatrice recalled my recollection of the fine original at the Palace of the Peak.

A bust of Thorwaldsen, singularly like Cuvier, is in one of the first rooms, and some copies of Canova's delicate female veiled heads are charmingly executed. The Chatsworth Laura is amongst them.

Amongst the numerous pictures are some glowing heads by Giorgione, bold drawings by the Caracci, and several specimens of minute beauty from the hands of Breughel and Marchesino, the very perfection of miniature excellence and graceful ornament.

A volume full of Leonardo da Vinci's drawings, is one of the great treasures of the library, but I could obtain a glimpse only of this and many others, guarded by an envious glass case. An early Dante tempts in vain to turn over the leaves; the Missal of

San Carlo Borromeo shines at a distance, and the fair lock of hair of the too beautiful Lucrezia lies beside her letters to her Cardinal lover.

Strange that such love as subsisted between the gifted but unprincipled Bembo and the wife of Alfonzo of Ferrara should ever have inspired him with delicate feeling and "real sensibility," which Sismondi considers him to have shewn in the following lines from a canzone of his 'Asolani :'

Qualor due fiere, in solitaria piaggia,
Girsen pascendo semplicette e snelle,
Per l'erba verde, scorgo di lontano,
Piangendo lor comincio: O lieta e saggia
Vita d'amanti, a voi nemiche stelle
Non fan vostro sperar fallace e vano.
Un bosco, un monte, un piano,
Un piacer, un desio, sempre vi tene.
Io de la donna mia quanto son lunge ?
Deh ! se pietà vi punge,
Date udienza inseme a le mie pene.
E'ntanto mi riscuoto, e veggio espresso
Che per cercar altrui, perdo me stesso.

I took up a book by chance from a pile, and started to find, in so learned a retreat, a wretched old French novel, apparently one of an extensive series, evidently more in use than works of weightier and more useful character. It is strange that libraries intended for the improvement of the public mind should be encumbered with so much trash as generally swells their shelves and pushes better authors "from their stools."

Petrarch, Dante, Boccacio unasked for, and 'Betsy Tatless' and her race always ready at hand!

The palace of the Brera is full of riches, and there is plenty to delight and instruct the artist and the amateur within its walls: the light is however glaring and ill-disposed, and it seemed to me that the young artists who were there *studying*, were more intent on play than work. Two youthful aspirants of fame, supposed to be copying a Gaudenzio Ferrari, were playfully chasing each other round their respective easels, with no stern monitor to repress their gambols.

The frescoes of Luini, ranged along a gallery of entrance, are admirable and singularly fresh and fine. One of the Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple delighted me by its grace and simplicity. The timid and modest young girl is mounting the broad steps which lead to the temple, alone and unsupported save by her conscious innocence, the admiring gaze of those below following her steps, and the benevolent welcome of the priests above are admirably expressed and exquisitely imagined.

The same subject, and the Salutation, by Gaudenzio Ferrari are also extremely attractive.

I was, however, obliged to hurry through the fine rooms, having unluckily deferred my visit to this gallery till too late in the day, and could therefore only carry away a faint recollection of many works of art. Several bright and fresh figures of

Saints in flowing draperies by Moretto, struck me as admirable, and attracted my eye by their peculiar style, with which I was hitherto unacquainted. Bellini also offered some of his wonderful truths to my observation, but I was forced almost to disregard him for the present, knowing that we should make nearer acquaintance at Venice, and Bassano's miracles of art I could only admire *en passant,* consoled with the same hope, which was not disappointed.

Raphael's great picture of the Marriage of the Virgin, in his early style, I dare not speak of, not having had time to dwell on its merits.

CHAPTER IX.

MONZA—THEODOLINDA—THE CHIOCCIA—IL SACRO CHIODO—BROLETTO—THE CRYSTAL POOL—APPROACH TO COMO.

THROUGH groves of acacias and long avenues of Lombardy poplars, we quitted the charming city of Milan, on our way to Monza: we had not chosen the railroad, which now connects the great town with that interesting spot where the celebrated cathedral is a daily attraction to the curious.

The weather was bright and beautiful, and the road presented a continued succession of cheerful objects: pretty country houses bordered the way, all with flourishing gardens full of roses. One in particular was remarkable for its luxuriance and enjoyable aspect. Above a wall garlanded with climbing plants over which peeped crimson and pink roses in charming profusion the house rose covered with its trellice, all over purple and white clusters of flowers and a pretty summer pavilion emulated its beauties at the end of the garden walks,

> "Both faire and fruitful, and the ground dispred
> With grassie green of delectable hew,
> And the tall trees with leaves unparelled,
> Are deckt with blossoms dyed in white and red,
> That mote the passengers thereto allure."

The blue mountains closed the distance and

beckoned us on towards the city of Theodolinda and the lovely shores of the most enchanting of lakes.

Monza, which formerly had a monastic character of quiet silence, is now noisy and disturbative. The moment a traveller stops at the Falcone, he is pounced upon by rapacious guides and intrusive waiters, and it is with difficulty he can make his way to any quarter which he desires to see, so noisy and vexatious are the interruptions that beset him.

Nevertheless it is worth while to endure some annoyance in order to gain the opportunity of beholding the beauties and curiosities of the fine Duomo, and to have antique memories renewed of the fair and famous Queen Theodolinda, the heroine of the Longobardi.

Her story is not altogether unlike that attributed by the Poet to the lovely Lalla Rookh, although her being a Bavarian does not suggest to the mind any very romantic visions of

"Eyes full of sleep, and cheeks all bright with roses."

She had however a great reputation for loveliness, wit, wisdom and virtue, and Antharis the King of the Lombards day after day sat listlessly in his palace, and night after night wooed sleep in vain, so anxious was he to behold the charms which poets sung throughout his dominions. At length Antharis resolved to satisfy himself that the bride he had already demanded of her father Garibold, was really the paragon described. He set forth therefore towards the Bavarian

court, disguised and ill-concealed amongst his nobles who were taking his message to the expectant King.

He saw the enchanting Theodolinda, and was at once convinced that poetry falls short of the reality of beauty.

Well might the charming princess wear by her side the gorgeous fan which I held in my hand, and examined amongst the treasures of the church, to shade the glories of those

"occhi, stelle mortali!"

whose beams captivated all who fell beneath their influence. The appendage is of painted leather, and its handle is most massive, for it appears to have been inserted, when used, in the case which now encloses it: this is of gold thickly encrusted with jewels; a large ring is appended by which it must have hung to the girdle.

The comb with which she was accustomed to smooth her golden hair is also preserved, and proves that her tresses must have been indeed redundant to require so powerful an instrument.

The cup, perhaps the very same from which her daring lover ventured to entreat her to allow him a draught, when his boldness in kissing her fair hand betrayed his rank to her discerning mind, aware that nature forbade,

"to less than monarchs that she could be dear."

Her cup is a hollow sapphire, or rather something very like it, fabricated perhaps in the furnaces of

Murano. Her cross is of fine crystal with gold chains and pearls hanging from it; her gospel-book all set with gems and antique carvings; her crown full of jewels and rough with barbaric gold, but what shall be said of her—*hen and chickens!*

These singular figures, in a tray of silver gilt, are called Chioccia or *Chucky*, and represent a hen and seven chickens picking up grains of corn. The learned are divided as to their meaning, and singularly comic are they to look upon: the more so from being produced amongst church relics, and shewn with quite as much solemnity as the famous Iron crown, *Il sacro Chiodo*, which is supposed to have been hammered into a thin plate from one of the nails of the Cross.

The usual fee produced the usual alacrity in the good sacristans of Monza, and the Crown, a most sacred relic, was with the customary irreverent process produced for our inspection: it is true that two or three candles were lighted in its honour, as it was placed on a pole and turned round and round in its crystal case for vulgar eyes to look upon.

The iron circle is enclosed in one of ornamented gold enamelled, and it is surrounded by small relics equally authentic, and exhibited with the same liberality "for a consideration."

The Gothic Cathedral is very impressive both within and without, in spite of restorations and alterations; Queen Theodolinda's sacred hen and chickens appear in a bas-relief over the grand door of entrance

and the interior walls are covered with dim frescoes relating to her life.

The town hall or Broletto of Monza is in a very dilapidated state, but still preserves the original character of its architecture : it is said to be part of a palace built by Frederick Barbarossa, and has the *ringhiera* or projecting balcony from which it was customary to address the people.

I first saw here the forked battlements peculiar to this part of Italy : they occur on the tower of the campanile, which is close to the Broletto.

We were literally driven out of Monza by the crowding and clamouring of the boys and beggars who come in shoals to beset travellers, but the most annoying of all are the guides of all sorts who insist on affording you their services, and quarrel with the attendants whom, to save farther molestation, you may have selected.

It is a curious fact that, if you take a guide to any place, that individual makes it a point of duty apparently to stand exactly in the way between the spectator and the object he seeks to regard, in such a manner as to mask the sight. There is a continued struggle to escape from these *cicerone*, who appear to think you come expressly for the pleasure of hearing their remarks, and gazing in their faces, instead of beholding the pictures or statues they are there to exhibit.

From Monza all the way to Como, there is nothing but beauty and fertility : the fields are highly culti-

vated and bordered by pretty hedges and neat inclosures, quite as well kept and as much in order as in England: it is true the acacias instead of quickset hedges, and the ranges of lofty purple mountains in the distance, dispel the thought of similarity which might otherwise arise, and the appearance of the people, though more picturesque, is certainly not so cleanly. For instance, I passed through one village clean in nothing but its possession of an enormous reservoir of sparkling water, round which, as at a fête, sate numerous groups of women and children; the first washing linen, the latter paddling in the crystal pool with naked legs and feet, and enjoying the coolness as much as flocks of white ducks, their companions. Some of the young girls who lay half reclining on the edge of the basin, with hands listlessly employed with their linen, wore the pretty circle of silver pins I had so much admired, with the addition of two much larger, stuck across to keep the luxuriant braids of hair in order.

The men who paused to gaze at us as we passed, were good-looking and healthy, wearing high-crowned hats and their coats hanging over their shoulders in the approved brigand style; but their aspect was very peaceful and happy, as they leant upon or supported their long light wicker baskets destined to receive the mulberry leaves from the neighbouring groves. The effluvia from the houses where silk-worms are kept made all the villages unpleasant, and the stripped trees would have de-

stroyed all beauty but for the luxuriance of other vegetation.

The country houses now began to assume a more refined and less rural character: hanging gardens filled with flowers, and terraces adorned with vases and statues appeared at the sides of the road, and soon the stately ivy-covered walls of the fine and singular old town of Como came in view.

I know not why I had connected the idea of Como with gardens and pleasure-houses and its lovely lake alone, passing over the memory of its former importance as the chief town of the powerful Comaschi; therefore, when for a considerable time we skirted its grand old walls and saw its bristling towers rising proudly and menacing from many a height, I was quite surprised and most agreeably so, to find that in the midst of scenes, unrivalled for refinement and beauty of the most graceful and elegant description, there existed a spot so grand, so severe, so strong, and so antique as the shattered but still powerful-looking town whose ancient gate we were now entering, one which had for many centuries braved its great and imperious neighbour Milan, and whose sons were preeminent as the bravest of all the races of the north of Italy.

CHAPTER X.

COMO.

"How stands Comum, that favourite scene of yours and mine? what becomes of the pleasant villa, the vernal portico, the shady plane-tree walk, the crystal stream so agreeably winding along its flowery banks, together with the charming Lake below, that serves at once the purposes of use and beauty?"

Pliny to Caninius Rufus.—Melmoth.

COMO—THE DUOMO—THE BROLETTO—SAN FEDELE—ITALIAN COURTESY—MOONLIGHT—THE LAKE STEAMER—THE SHORES—THE PALACES—THE OLIVE TREES—PLINY—THE VILLAS OF TORNO—BALBIANO—THE LAKE—NESSO—THE MARGIN—THE VILLAS—VAL DEL' INTELVIO—COLICO—STELVIO.

SISMONDI fancifully likens the figure of the town of Como to a crawfish, the mouth, being turned to the extremity of the lake, forms its port, the two fauxbourgs of Vico and Coloniola spread forth their arms on the two shores like the claws, the body is stretched forth far into the plain but is kept in by three heights, on each of which is placed a strong castle, these are called Castelnovo, Baradello and Carnesino, and to finish the resemblance, a long suburb, curved between the eastern and southern ends, will answer for the tail.

These details were not immediately apparent to me as I entered the antique town, and found myself on the little port crowded with pleasure-boats and

small fishing vessels. The sun shone with dazzling brilliancy and every ripple of the blue lake glittered with burnished gold—the pointed prows of the somewhat clumsy, but commodious boats bristled along the shore and their gayly striped awning, shading the seats and little table within, invited to an excursion. Our inn, l'Angelo, was full of bustle, and all wore an aspect of cheerfulness from the balcony of our room, which commanded a view of the small harbour, guarded at its entrance by two pavilion-towers and shutting out the rest of the beautiful lake, as though the scenery beyond were too exquisite to be given to the view all at once.

The first sound I heard at Como was the music of a bad guitar, accompanied by a very sweet female voice, which soon drew a crowd beneath the hotel window, and increased the noise and confusion occasioned by the arrival of the diligence, bringing fresh strangers to explore the beauties of these shores.

I lost very little time before I set forth to explore the curious old town, whose low arcades and antique houses presented a more characteristic aspect than that of any Italian town I had yet seen: most of the streets are slovenly, and those near the quay extremely dirty, the best part is in the neighbourhood of the Duomo, although there is no good row of buildings anywhere, and but few mansions. Mean little shops under shabby colonnades are the chief feature, but nothing is remembered in the town, or

is worth notice before the strangely beautiful pile of the cathedral and the singular fabric of the town-hall clinging to its side.

New as this style of architecture was to me I was puzzled to ascertain the date of the remarkable construction before me. So many buildings in France were formed on the models of Italian churches and palaces in the time of Francis I. and Henry II., that I was inclined, at first, to attribute no older a date to all I saw, and to feel disappointed that all was so modern.

The Duomo of Como was, however, begun in the fourteenth and finished at the beginning of the sixteenth century, although the cupola was not completed till 1722, and here may be seen much of the original idea carried out by later architects and sculptors. The façade is covered with ornament: scrolls, inscriptions, figures, flowers, leaves, garlands, vases are scattered up and down; there is wonderful variety, with a strange mixture of the classic and romantic. Here the two statues of the Plinys, erected by their proud fellow-citizens of Como, are seated beneath lace-work canopies: here the Magi are adoring the sacred babe in true Gothic style: here crowd emblems of masonic mystery, and here extend tattered scrolls of deep meaning.

The fine white marble pillars of entrance are of various shapes, round and many sided, twisted and fluted, some encrusted with wreathing flowers springing from elaborately carved vases, some dotted

and scored with involved patterns of eastern form: others surrounded by cords and cables, and cut and carved into a thousand zigzag and dentilated appearances, without being positively Saxon or Norman.

The lateral doorways are beautiful, particularly the northern, which is the very perfection of the redundant Arabesque style, all birds and angels and winged and twining things: but such doors as these have parallels which can scarcely be said of the effect of the grand façade, for it struck me as unlike anything of its kind beheld elsewhere.

The pointed centre is surmounted by a fretted turret; at the two angles, edged with jagged ornament, rise two little tourelles, tipped with figures bearing flags. Other descending angles start from these, and are terminated by new tourelles with figures and pyramids. From these four towers descend to the ground narrow square pilasters, pierced in compartments with niches containing figures about halfway down: the remaining niches are filled with medallions and mystical shapes of all sorts, fountains, vines, bouquets, castles, churches and masonic riddles.

Above the principal entrance is a row of statues in niches, surmounted with rich tabernacle work, canopies and a fine bold medallion, all surrounded by a corded circular arch. Above this is a fine and very richly carved circular window, above and at each side of which are canopies filled with statues.

Some of the immensely long windows have blunted extremities, some are slightly pointed, and the patterns round all are very rich.

There is no counting the little towers crowned by statues, which rise from every projection at the sides, and the huge dome capped by its own peculiar turret, the largest of all, completes the building.

Strange as this mixed architecture appears, it is still enhanced by the odd construction close beside it. This is the Broletto, or town-hall, built of striped dark red and white marble in layers. The pillars which support the lower pointed arches seem sunk into the ground, and it is so close to the cathedral that it seems to form a part of its walls. The date is 1215, but it looks even older, and is a most extraordinary edifice. The usual *ringhiera* appears on the first floor, and the form of the circular arched windows is the same as at Monza, but this Broletto is of much greater extent than that of the palace of Barbarossa as it now appears. There is no beauty in its aspect, but it is extremely curious, and consequently interesting.

The very acme, however, of the curious and grotesque is to be found in the façade of the church of San Fedele, a fabric of the time of the Longobardi. There is one door of entrance so extraordinary that I cannot imagine the odd ornaments could have been originally designed to be placed there; I rather think the present pillars must once have been friezes running along the tops of columns in a

pagan temple. Beside a rudely formed door-way, simple enough to have served the Druids, stands a huge projecting block, forming one side of a kind of porch. This is carved all over in compartments apparently without connexion. Clinging to a pillar is a writhing serpent* with wings, who is suffering from the attack of a huge griffin with an eagle's beak and a bear's body, who is mercilessly tearing his prey. Elegant arabesques surround these figures, and beyond sits enthroned under an antique arch the figure of a monarch or hero, quite careless of the *charivari* which must be made close to his ears by the belligerent monsters, his neighbours.

Altogether nothing can be more inexplicable, and I longed for the riddle to be read by some modern Benedetto Giovio, but found none.

Benedetto, the historian of Como, lies in the Cathedral, where there are several other monuments and a few good pictures, which the dim light does not allow to be seen. The two animals, called lions, which always adorn the entrances of Italian churches, are placed in the interior of the Duomo, but it is possible that they formerly stood outside, as it is

* Perhaps this is intended to represent the strange creature which, tradition says, is to be found browsing at the bottom of the Lake: or it may be, that the superstition itself arose from the mysterious representation. It is said that fearfully shaped lizards of enormous length are sometimes seen, by moonlight, in the clefts of the hills above Como; may not one of these animals of San Fedele be a *correct* portrait of their grim figures?

evident that considerable alterations have taken place in the piazza beyond.

In the glare of a bright sun the little port of Como, in spite of its glassy water and its tower-crowned hills, is far from attractive, and any attempt to walk along the margin of its pool is disappointing, for sheds for boat-building, besides litters innumerable, prevent all passing beyond a circumscribed limit, although, from the inn, we had imagined a stroll would be charming. My companion wished to make a sketch of the harbour, but it was found difficult to select a spot sufficiently clean to allow of a few minutes' pause beneath the ruined, antique arcades opposite the water.

Italian courtesy, which is always awake, would not permit our standing in the street, and the baker, his wife, and friend, at whose dingy portal we stopped, all interested themselves to procure us chairs. The action was the same as I had often met with in France, but the manner was characteristically different. There is none of that easy familiarity, mixed with wondering curiosity, amongst the Italians, which one always meets with in the lively French. They are equally courteous and obliging, but have more dignity and shew more deference in their style of offering a civility: they are graver and more gentle, and do not intrude on those whom they make their temporary guests.

We accepted the seats against our will, for we soon found the neighbourhood of our civil friend's

domicile, by which a black gutter ran from an alley near, far from pleasing: we excused ourselves therefore from further stay, as the evening was drawing in, and parted from our hosts with a promise to return hereafter.

Moonlight soon entirely changed the scene, and turned all the defects of the port of Como into beauties: then rose the dark mountains, grand and solemn, gemmed with silver light: then the high antique towers and pointed arcades looked majestic and palace-like: numerous gliding boats shot over the transparent waves, the firefly lights they bore glimmering in the blue depths: myriads of stars appeared far and near, like a caravan of pilgrims approaching the shrine of that enthroned saint whose glories streamed along the clear sky, and touched, like faith, every object it shone on with lustre and beauty not their own.

The only drawback to this lovely scene was, that there was no solitude there. Not a creature in Como seemed to think it advisable to go to bed, and throughout the night a chorus of voices was heard, talking and singing, and laughing and screaming, till I found my admiration give place to weariness, and retired to a back room where, if there was no moonlight prospect, I at least found quiet and repose.

The next morning we departed in the steamer, which now renders the voyage of the lake easy: though we did not intend returning to Como that

day, we took advantage of this pleasant mode of conveyance to become acquainted with the lake throughout its whole extent, from Como at one end to Colico at the other. Nothing could exceed the beauty of the weather: warm, without being sultry, with a soft gentle breeze, a cloudless sky, and a brilliant sun, which was shaded from us by a pretty striped awning, drawn over the graceful and commodious steam-boat, in which we found many gaily dressed passengers prepared for a day of enjoyment on the most enchanting of all fairy seas in the world.

The motion of the pretty vessel was quite unfelt, as we glided swiftly along the heavenly blue waters. At first the shores are pressed together, and the mountains are rather low, but are dotted with villas from the utmost heights down to the water's edge. Every ten minutes, as we receded from Como, the town and its towers looked more picturesque, till it disappeared, and new charms succeeded. I soon discovered, beautiful as it first seemed, that the real enchantment of the scenery was but begun in this neighbourhood, and was becoming every moment more and more powerful.

Marble terraces rose from the waters with their trellices of grape vine extending in graceful lines far up the gentle sloping hills. A soft feathery tree, of a tender pale green, waved its boughs every here and there above the emerald leaves of the rich vines, and gave peculiar and contrasted beauty to the tints. This I found was the olive, the first I had ever

seen, and most agreeably was I impressed with this earliest acquaintance, for I had prepared myself to see a stunted ugly shrub with a hue of the sallow, for so they are said to appear in the south of France where I had not been. On the western side of the Pyrenees, olives are not seen, except in the pages of Mrs. Ratcliffe, who presses

"trees of all growth and flowers of every hue"

into her charming romances, those unrivalled pictures, wonderfully correct to nature in general, but mistaken occasionally in local descriptions.

Those who know Italy well may smile at my delight on first beholding the olive, but I imagine every one must feel the same pleasureable sensations on becoming acquainted with scenes and objects familiar in idea, but, though long desired and fancied, unknown before. I seemed now to have entered Italy indeed: here were her orange groves, her citron bowers, her festooned vines, her terraced gardens, and her olive fields: here was her Paradise of roses, for roses clustered on every bough, roses blushed in every wave that rippled to the marble stairs of her crowding palaces, roses twined over every pillar of the delicate temples which threw their snowy reflection on the waters: as in an eastern garden,

"the cypress and the myrtle, like the lover and the beloved grew side by side."

It seemed to me that the vale of Cashmeer,

"with its roses, the brightest that earth ever gave,"

was a fable to the gardens of the lake of Como, and that all the delights that poets dream of were concentred in that delicious spot.

The beautiful world around me gained nothing by association, for I was far from those who would have entered into the delights of the scene with me, and shared all the enthusiasm of the moment. I was surrounded by strangers, to most of whom the place seemed familiar and its charms habitual, and no communicated reminiscence of poetry or history, no indulgence in a passing vision of romance or sentiment, such as are sure to arise between old familiar spirits, enhanced the enjoyment of the time.

Nature produced her own unassisted effect, and the grace of art shone forth in all its unaided refinement.

We continued to pass numerous beautiful bays and terrace gardens, with their villas with musical names.

There is a dark, precipitous rock, rising boldly from the waters in a secluded bay, sheltered from the sun and wind, rugged with caverns and black with cypress woods, here, it is said, Pliny, the classic spirit of the lake lived, and here he mused and lingered out many a summer day in that charming retreat which attracts the eye from the gayer spots around.

The two villas of Torno are thus described by their fortunate possessor.

"On this shore I have many villas, but two as they please me most, so principally engage me.

"The one, placed on rocks after the Baian fashion, looks over the

lake, the other, also in the Baian manner, touches its waters: for which reason I am inclined to call the higher Tragedy, because she is supported on buskins, the lower Comedy because her feet are sandaled. Each has its peculiar charms, which, to the possessor of both, from their very diversity, are the more attractive. One enjoys the lake more closely, the other more extensively: *this* embraces in its prospect one bay only of a soft circling outline, *that* with its lofty promontory divides two. One commands an extended line of coast which, stretching to a great distance, appears like a school of equestrian exercise; from the other the gentle curve of the shore forms a spacious and sheltered portico for pedestrian recreation. The higher feels not the waves, they break at the feet of the lower: from that above you can look down upon the fishermen, from that below you can partake the sport yourself and throw the hook from your chamber, nay almost from your bed, as from a boat.

"These united attractions have induced me to make to each of them additions in which they are separately deficient.

"How is my friend employed? is it in the pleasures of study, or in those of the field? or does he unite both on the banks of our favourite Larius. The fish in that noble lake will supply you with sport of that kind, as the woods that surround it will afford you game, while the solemnity of that sequestered scene will at the same time dispose your mind to contemplation."

Thus writes Pliny to his friend Caninius, who had a villa on the lake; and he continues, when absent, to regret the ties which keep him far away from those scenes to which both he and his companions seem so much attached.

In another letter he says:—

"I was lately at Alsium* (now Alzia, near Como), where my wife's mother has a villa which once belonged to Verginius Rufus."

* He was extremely fond of this retirement, and used to call it "the nest of his old age."

Virgil sings the praises of this beautiful spot, and Claudian celebrates it.

The boat neared and passed the promontory of Balbiano, which may be called the guardian of the lake; after this point all its beauties are fully developed.

A cluster of temple-like villas crown the height and descend by marble terraces to the extreme margin of the water, the last row of white columns dipping their bases into the crystal mirror which sends back their reflection. As we receded from it the promontory took the resemblance of an island and appeared to stand out directly from the shore. Balbiano is seen, a lovely and conspicuous object, from a great distance, and formed the chief point in the charming scene which afterwards delighted me from the soft retreat of Bellaggio.

Villa after villa is pointed out as the bark glides on, each with some striking charm of its own, each inviting to land, each suggesting ideas of enjoyment and happiness, such as few scenes can really afford in the uncertain passage of human life.

> "The painted flowers, the trees, upshooting high,
> The trembling groves, the crystal running by,"

continued the charming illusion, into which all poets, both ancient and modern, might well fall, while skimming the surface of such a lake in such sunshine as I was favoured with, during the whole time of my propitious visit to these fairy regions.

At the promontory of Bellaggio the lake divides into three arms, one leading to Como, one to Lecco,

and one to Colico, whither our course was bent. The beauty of the shore at Bellaggio is unspeakable; the gardens of the villa Melzi and its groves slope down to the water's edge, and the lofty terraces of Serbeloni look far over the enchanting prospect: the pretty inn, to which we were to return in the afternoon, was pointed out to me amidst its blushing roses and twining vines, and I rejoiced in the prospect of such a sojourn. Meanwhile Bellaggio was passed, and the broad arm which conducts to Lecco, disclosing scenes which seemed to rival even those we had already seen, as we glided swiftly on. Nesso appeared in its fairy nook, half concealed in perfumed shade, and the elegant villa of the Queen of Song, the generous and noble-minded Pasta, who delights to share the advantages she has derived from her genius, with young aspirants for the fame in which, as well as in worldly goods she is so rich. The palace once belonging to a royal exile, one of many of her class, whom misfortune, imprudence, and the ills that wait on those born in too high an aery to hope for quiet enjoyment, had made a victim—her beautiful palace looked all joy and sunshine, and there, perhaps, she was happy for a time, in spite of evil tongues and civil traitors, who filled her rose gardens with scorpions, and watched her careless follies to turn them into crimes!—It is impossible to pass the villa d'Este without a sigh of pity for her whose name must

" sleep in the shade,
Where cold and unhonoured her relics are laid."

One point, where the rocks on that side the lake are peculiarly rugged and of singular forms, is remarkable as having a reputation for producing from its neighbouring village of Argenio the most learned persons of the country. I was gravely assured, that the very shepherds of the valley, called Val Intelvio, are never seen without a book in their hands, and that most of the great men in various departments of literature and art, have come from this favoured spot. Certain it is that the place has a desolate dreary aspect, suitable to the hardships that wait on genius, and contrasted in a most striking manner with the cultivated and beautiful shore, exactly opposite the small creek that separates the two promontories.

This valley stretches far away, and communicates with the Lake of Lugano.

The higher mountains now rise in great majesty, and a snowy range extend their white arms, embracing the waters where the Adda enters their bosom from the Valteline.

We reached Colico, a humble little town at the foot of Monte Legnone, and as the steam-boat pauses there for some time, previous to its daily return to Como, we landed.

Amongst the snowy peaks and domes at the extremity of the lake, numerous depressions may be observed where the darker shadows indicate the valleys which branch off in different directions. On one hand, the opening mountains shew where far

beyond, but concealed by its crowding attendants, the Stelvio rises in solitary magnificence, and the deep clefts beneath point to the pass which conducts to its glorious summit. On the other, the glittering snows tell where the Splugen invites the traveller to explore the charming valleys, and dare the bold heights where he presides, and a whole army of icy guards stand at the very edge of the summer waters, strangely contrasted with its tranquil aspect.

This is

"the region, this the soil, the clime,"

where the almost magical achievement of Marshal Macdonald, and his army, of the passage of the Splugen, so amazed and scared the inhabitants of Chiavenna and Sondrio, who thought the ice-covered mountains and their snowy whirlwinds, sufficient to appal the stoutest hearts, and keep the most daring enemy from the valley of the Valteline, at such a season as that in which the descent was accomplished.

"Achievements such as these," says a contemporary historian, "appear impossible, and more so to the actors than the spectators: neither would posterity credit them, if our own age, (so fruitful in narrative) could not bring a host of witnesses to verify them, for neither ancient nor modern history records any exploits more wonderful than this, or so truly Herculean."

CHAPTER XI.

RETURN—THE FRANCISCANS—THE BOAT—SOMARIVA—TRADITION—THE GARDENS—THE INN AT BELLAGGIO—STORMS—VILLA MELZI—BEATRICE—SERBELONI—THE BAMBINO—THE CONCERT—EFFECTS ON THE LAKE—THE ROCK OF COLUNGO—VARENNA—THE PARADISE—THE GRIM CHATELAIN—STELVIO PASS.

Colico has no attractions in itself, and is a dirty miserable little place, quite out of keeping with the beauties near it. We therefore returned to the vessel, where it was extremely agreeable to sit on the deck while we waited till the passengers were assembled, and, shaded by the pretty awning, to take our pastoral refreshment of fruit and bread, with the rippling waters at our feet, and the snowy mountains heaped one on the other in our view, and reflected in the blue transparent mirror, where for thousands of years, they have bent over as if to gaze into the secrets below.

Suddenly disturbing the extreme calm, a light refreshing breeze sprung up and relieved the scorching effect of the sun's rays, which for the last hour had been too intense, and we set forth again on our return. Like messengers sent out from the snowy summits across the deep blue sky, delicate white

clouds came floating up, which thickening, gathered far along the peaks and remained stationary. A deep sigh along the shore awoke the breathless stillness that reigned, and then came a sudden flapping of the canvass which was a warning attended to in an instant. The awning was taken down without loss of time, and the spirits abroad seemed to exult by a long low growl, to see that their power was not disregarded.

No storm, however, then came on, but we sped swiftly along, pursued, as it seemed, by a host of beautiful clouds, which now shaded and now were dispersed by the struggling sun, the heat of which was still intense.

> Ma il vento e amore e il mar fede non ave :
> Altri seguendo il lusingar fallace
> Per notturno seren già sciolse audace,
> Che ora è sommerso o va perduto o pave.

On board I was entertained by observing two Franciscan friars, in long and ample woollen robes fastened with a cord from which their rosaries depended. Their hoods were thrown back and displayed their shining shaven crowns and good-looking faces. One was particularly tall and stout, with a cheerful good-humoured expression, somewhat jovial : he seemed full of jokes, to judge by the laughter at his end of the vessel. The other sat apart, and was silent and solemn : his head was fine and his features expressive, and bore a singular resemblance to a head I saw almost immediately after of St. John the Baptist

by Albano, in the Somariva Palace. Such heads are by no means uncommon in Italy and suit better with the severe costume than the comfortable face of the companion friar.

The breeze was very fresh as the steamer paused a moment opposite to the shore of Cadenabbia, where in the midst of the lake a little boat with hoops to support awnings and with gay red cushions, lay dancing on the waves awaiting our return by appointment. We hastened to enter it, and observed at a distance several other public ones approaching in order to take passengers ashore at this point. We found however, to our surprise, that our boat was instantly taken possession of, and numerous uninvited guests, amongst whom were the jolly and the solemn Franciscans, had quietly seated themselves on the benches.

Our boatmen now intimated to the strangers that this was a private boat, hired some hours before, and we then found that the steamer, which was already nearly out of sight, had taken advantage of our opportunity to get rid of its freight as soon as possible, as the symptoms of a coming storm were not to be mistaken.

We accordingly lingered a little, till the public boats came up, and we then saw, or seemed to see, every one quit us for their own destination, and we pursued our way towards a beckoning palace, whose glittering marble steps dipped into the laving waters, and seemed to invite us to hasten towards one of the most lovely temples that art had ever placed amongst the most enchanting scenes of nature.

Our pretty bark glided gently to the land and stopped at the foot of the marble steps of the Palazzo Somariva. There was a perfect blaze of roses on each side as I slowly ascended to the several platforms, where fountains were throwing up their glittering waters amongst a wilderness of sweets. The marble balustrades were all draperied with over-hanging rose-branches, crimson, white and pink, and nothing could exceed the delight of resting awhile from the still increasing heat on the brink of a fountain, with the wild waters splashing and murmuring deliciously all round, in the thick shade of the arching, luxuriant shrubs.

As I looked down towards the lake, I saw to my surprise the figure of the solemn Franciscan stealing noiselessly along, beneath the lowest terrace of the Palazzo; whether he emerged from our own boat, where he had been seated invisibly, or from some other equally invisible, I could not understand. We had apparently parted in the centre of the lake, yet there he was, with his hood thrown back, his eyes on the ground, and his solemn pace

"sober, stedfast, and demure,"

giving not a glance to the upper world and its roses, or the fountains warbling as they flowed—by which I was seated.

We walked through the fine halls, all marble and with sculptured walls, shewing the triumphs of Alexander in magnificent bas-relief: this fine work of Thorwaldsen is as a whole too splendid to be

criticised, and I could not but be annoyed with myself for being disagreeably struck by the flocks of ill-made sheep introduced into the subject: one seems a model of another, and there is no sort of variety in the attitudes of the silly multitude which crowd the frieze.

Here is the last masterpiece of Canova, the Palamedes; and his charming Cupid and Psyche with all their ballet graces, which I had often seen before in Paris.

The palace is built in exquisite taste, and there are many fine pictures and statues in the elegantly formed rooms, which have been long untenanted, owing to the deaths of the last two proprietors within a short time of each other. There are, it seems, five claimants of the property, and these heirs, being impatient for their respective shares, have hastily concluded a bargain which has transferred this lovely place to the Princess Carlotta of Piémont, who will shortly take possession of her treasure, acquired for the insignificant sum of one million of francs, although five was thought an adequate price for all the miracles of art that its walls enclose, and which were accumulated in the course of years by the Count de Somariva at incredible expense.

There is an old belief, darkly hinted at by the boatmen of the lake, that this palace and domain have lain under a ban since the period when money, suddenly acquired, purchased the lordship. Always beautiful the dwelling must have been from its position, and

always charming must have been its gardens and its prospects, but when the last scion of the ancient ruined family who had called it theirs for centuries, lived there secluded, it was not so grand, so gay, nor so richly adorned as it now is, for the widow had little left of her once large fortune, to enable her to keep it up with proper dignity.

It is whispered that cunning lawyers made the arrangements which gave over the right to the new possessor, and that less than justice was done to the daughter of a once powerful house, which was extinct in her, when she retired into obscurity to die.

The sun of royalty now shone upon Somariva, for it will not change its poetical name, and it is to be hoped all will be prosperous with the owners in future: assuredly such an abode should not be associated with vexations or cares; it seems rather the summer residence of gentle idleness and pleasure.

The terraced groves and gardens are so delicious that it is difficult to quit them when once entered, and I wandered from one bower of pomegranate and orange to another, from one jasmine-covered trellice to the next inviting terrace, all flowering myrtle and waving acacia, with a thousand nameless shrubs bending down with blossoms, till I reached a pine grove on a height surrounded by trees of the most luxuriant growth, where a whole concert of nightingales, concealed amidst the thickest shade, made the air re-echo with their melodious rivalry.

I never beheld any thing so exquisite as this secluded grove of tall pines, whose graceful stems were twined to an immense height with clustering and clinging crimson roses. As I lingered here in a sort of enchantment, a sudden cloud came over the bright blue sky above the pine tops, and a deep long roar of thunder travelling up the cloudy heavens, near and unmistakeable, proclaimed that the threatened storm was coming. A bright flash swept along the walk from end to end. A few large drops fell clattering and clashing amongst the large magnolia leaves, and the perfumes of the shaken branches, which swayed to the awakened breeze, loaded the air with overpowering odours.

On emerging from the grove to a more open terrace I came at once upon a magnificent scene. From one mountain to the other, spanning the lake entirely with its many-coloured girdle, appeared a vivid rainbow. A hundred little fleecy white clouds rose from behind the heights and hurried up into the sky, forming a canopy which grew darker and darker, and sent down other clouds, messengers of threatening aspect, obscuring the sapphire depths which still shone in the bright sunlight.

Louder and louder growled the echoing thunder, and, as if pleased with the deep base of the undersong, the chorus of nightingales grew wilder and more thrilling, as the pattering drops descended near their sheltered nests at intervals.

Much to my regret I was warned that although

the opposite shore appeared so near, it was two miles across the lake to Bellaggio, and should the storm increase and the wind rise there might be some peril to our frail vessel. I would willingly have run the risk, in spite of the many stories I had heard of the effect of sudden squalls on these waters, and would fain have delayed still longer amongst the most enchanting scenes of a fairy land such as I had never even dreamt of, but it was absolutely necessary to attend to the warnings of the experienced, and I re-entered the boat, whose little sail, before we had reached the centre of the lake, was, as if by magic, lowered in a moment, as a gust swept by us which set the bark dancing and trembling on the troubled waves. Purple and orange and crimson lines now streaked the sky, and the rich bright blue was nearly obscured; flashes of lightning played swiftly along the surface of the waters, and darted from openings above the darkened rocks on the shore.

But the little promontory of Bellaggio was gained, and we disembarked amidst the affectionate greetings of the hostess of the quiet rural vine-trelliced inn, which had been chosen by the director of our travels in preference to the hotel at Cadenabbia, which is noisy, and whose proprietors have a reputation for being somewhat imposing.

Whatever may be the merits or demerits of the rival inn on the opposite shore, we could not have chosen better than this charming retreat, where we

soon found ourselves installed for several days in neat pretty apartments, looking on the lovely lake and mountains.

We had reason to congratulate ourselves on having reached the shore in time, for the long threatened storm, slow but sure, now steadily took possession of the sky.

"The mists boiled up amongst the mountains;"

the

"big rain came dancing to the earth:"

the thunder woke a ceaseless echo from every height, and broad and continuous sheets of lightning poured from every laden purple cloud: still the sun shone brightly, and gleamed golden on the lake on the peaks and amongst the waving groves: for several hours this commotion of the elements lasted, and grand and glorious was its effect. So absorbed was I by it that I was startled to find, on re-entering the sitting room, after having for some time enjoyed its beauties, that the shutters of that apartment were closed, and the table covered with lights, in order that the vivid flashes might be less visible.

It is certainly a sad infirmity to be so affected by a storm as to be unable to profit by its splendours, and enjoy the grandest sight in nature, when the might and majesty of the jarring elements manifest themselves in scenes so sublimely beautiful as these lovely Italian lakes present. As we had one of these storms almost every evening for a month, I was

furnished with constantly recurring pleasure, savage though it were, and those of our party who could not take the same delight in such wild doings, were as continually plagued, to their, no doubt, great mortification.

From the terrace balcony bordered with vines at the charming inn at Bellaggio, a most enchanting and extensive view of the arms of the lake is obtained, the promontory of Balbiano with its descending palaces, comes clearly out of the blue waters and all the outlines of beautiful mountains wave along the sky in varied grandeur: a continual change of beauty takes place in the scene, as sunlight, storm, or moonlight affects it. Somariva's perfumed groves and thick woods, climbing far up the hills, shine in the waters opposite, and the gardens of the Villa Melzi and the Serbeloni surround and skirt the delicious spot. While on the other hand towards Lecco the waters stretch away into scenes of singular beauty.

I passed one long silent sultry summer day in the gardens of Melzi, under the shade of acacias as large as oaks and spreading myrtles and magnolias, amidst groves of tropical trees and plants all breathing perfume. The orange trees do not however grow in the ground, nor are they so fine here as many I have seen in France: the odours they exhale are always exquisite, and there are so many arranged on the terraces in pots that the air is laden with their charming sighs.

The grounds are beautifully laid out:

"Fresh flowers in wide parterres and shady walks between,"

and busts, statues, and temples, seem here natural accompaniments to the groves.

The water ripples at the foot of these gardens, and the ear is soothed with the soft sound of passing oars as light skiffs move by. I sat in a pretty pavilion, fitted up with sofas and chairs placed in one of the many charming retreats, and enjoyed to its full extent the *dolce far niente*, which it is so easy to learn to appreciate in Italy. Occasionally the silent leaves would rustle with faint murmur, a few notes from an awakened bird would startle the stillness;

"While freshened from the wave the Zephyr flew."

A few straggling parties strolled into this lovely retreat while I lingered there, and the graceful head dress of the young girls, their silver pins glittering in the sun, or a blossom of pomegranate placed amidst their shining black hair, not a little embellished the scene.

One resting place beneath the trees and close to the rippling lake, pleased me particularly; a well executed group representing Dante and Beatrice adorned the centre of the walk, near which seats were placed at distances, and as I took mine on the white marble steps of the pedestal I read these lines of the immortal bard engraved in golden characters:

"E quella donna che Dio mi menava
Disse muta pensier pensa ch'io sono
Presso a coivi ch'ogni torto disgrazia
Io mi rivolzi all amoroso suono del mio conforto."

It is equally enjoyable to wander in the groves

of Serbeloni, where the view is finer, and the terraces "de toute beauté."

The family of Serbeloni is of great antiquity, and is even derived from a knight of fame, Cerdubellius, who commanded the Spaniards in the time of Scipio Africanus. It was divided into three branches, the eldest of which flourished at Milan. A daughter of this race, Cecilia, was married into the illustrious house of Medici, and one of her daughters was the mother of that excellent saint, Carlo Borromeo.

Several great warriors have proceeded from this root: the Marquis of Marignan, son of Cecilia; was the greatest captain of his age, and Gabriel Serbeloni his cousin, equalled him in fame and bravery. Gabriel distinguished himself in the wars of Charles the Fifth, and it was he who took Saluces in Piedmont for the emperor; he accompanied the Duke of Alva in many of his expeditions, and being a great engineer, was usually sent before the army to make the roads ready. He was at the battle of Lepanto, captain-general of artillery—that battle renowned in story, and the more renowned because the immortal Cervantes lost his good left hand there. He was, like the poet, made prisoner by the Turks, and afterwards exchanged for thirty-six Turkish officers who had been taken at Lepanto: as he had given the infidels much trouble, repulsing them no less than fourteen times before they took the citadel he defended at Tunis, they resolved that his country should buy him dearly.

The return of Gabriel to his native city in 1575, was a signal for public rejoicings, he governed there for two years, braving the plague, from which the actual governor d'Aimonte, fled. He joined Don Juan of Austria in the Netherlands, with two thousand brave Milanese. The heroic Don Juan loved him extremely, and always called him *father.* To Gabriel the prince gave the care of constructing the citadel of Namur, and it was at that time that they both fell sick, so that the works which Serbeloni superintended, could not advance. Don Juan was then only thirty-three, and Gabriel past seventy, yet the prince died and the old soldier recovered, contrary to the predictions of all the assembled physicians but one.

The citadel of Antwerp was built by him, and to his great knowledge and valour may be attributed most of the conquests in the Netherlands.

A brother of Gabriel was also a great warrior, but remarkable for his excessive cruelty to the Protestants in Piedmont and the south of France. In the '*good work*' of extermination and punishment he was ably assisted by the Counts of Somariva and Susa.

Who would imagine that those lords who owned such lovely peaceful villas as Serbeloni and Somariva, could know what cruelty and persecution meant!

The enchantments of Bellaggio, offer altogether

the very perfection of beauty, and a whole summer passed on the margin of that lovely lake would not be long enough to enjoy all it can give.

As I was sitting at my window, on the terrace at the inn of Bellaggio, a young girl came to bring me a message, whom I detained in order to question her about her beautiful hair and its ornaments. I suggested that it must take a long time every morning, to arrange those *spille* round the head so carefully, but was answered that the event occurred only once a week, when an artist visited all the damsels who required his aid and decorated them for the Sunday's fête. I exclaimed in amazement, that they must surely be injured and displaced if they were not removed at night, but my smiling informant assured me that they were very careful and never lay down on them, resting their heads on their hands while they slept.

Any thing more uncomfortable I could not conceive, and could scarcely after this information look at them without a painful sensation. This is indeed the very triumph of vanity, to sacrifice sleep and ease in a warm climate to appearance! and when one considers that every other part of the dress of these women is slovenly, the fact is more remarkable still.

The chief female attendant at this hotel was the heiress of the property; her uncle and aunt are old people, and shortly intend to retire, selling the house, which it is to be feared will cease to be one of

public entertainment; we were told the damsel would be worth seeking for:

> "I tell you he that can lay hold on her
> Will have the chinks."

She was tall and stately, very pretty but pale and apparently in delicate health; her hair was as luxuriant as that of her fellows, and the silver pins she wore were particularly beautiful, being flat leaf-shaped, and open worked in a graceful pattern, ending in a point which gave still more the air of a glory surrounding the head; two much larger than the rest finished the circle at each end. She was fond of carrying about a *bambino* belonging to a friend; the fairest, softest, fattest, little thing that ever was seen, it was swathed up in that unnatural manner common to this part of the world, and was held as if by a stalk or a porte-bouquet, as it was passed from one person to another to be admired. I never saw such patient endurance as it displayed, turning its fine dark blue eyes about in innocent amazement: one might have thought it was only alive at top, so oddly were its lower limbs concealed, yet the pretty philosopher seemed perfectly contented, and I suppose finds room to grow in spite of the confinement it suffers.

Many were the singular and beautiful effects I observed on the lake, during my stay here; it is not surprising that the dwellers in such regions are impressed superstitiously with the sights and sounds which meet the eye and ear so frequently: there is

scarcely an hour passes without the waters, clouds, or mountains disclosing some wonder, and assuming some unexpected form.

One warm afternoon I sat watching the scene from my terrace, when all was still and calm, while a party in a neighbouring suite of rooms were playing on a bad pianoforte and singing in parts, somewhat carelessly, but with voices of considerable melody: suddenly a silver laugh sounded at a short distance, and it was evident that a new comer had joined the circle; welcome she must have been, to judge by the merry greeting given her, and young and pretty I imagined her to be by her charming voice, which presently added to the music. Occasionally interrupted by laughter and feigned mistakes, she went on with sweet snatches,

"sung and carolled out so clear,
That men and angels might rejoice to hear."

The amateur concert continued some time, and closed with applause and merriment, as the clatter of plates and knives and forks told that another occupation, not perhaps less pleasing to the party was about to succeed. It was then that a few spoken words reached me, and a little destroyed the illusion I had been fond of indulging that none but Italians could sing so well, for those words were German, and I discovered that all the party were strangers, probably from Vienna, who seemed to have visited the lovely lake for the first time, like myself.

While I mused upon the effect of prejudice on

the mind, the usual evening indications of a coming storm were heard, large drops fell on the paved terrace, from the Como end of the lake a crowd of thin, ghost-like mists advanced slowly, veiling peak and promontory one after another; vivid flashes of light attended their path, now disclosing a dark mountain, and now gleaming on a broad expanse of snow, revealed for a moment, and then covered again: grey, purple and black clouds gathered above, and struggling bursts of sun glanced only to disappear: the lake, whose depths had shone all day alternately with tints of the richest and most delicately transparent green in the shifting light, now grew grey and turbid, and its surges beat hoarsely against the little parapet wall of the inn garden filled with roses, and the stone steps of the under arcade beneath my balcony terrace.

Suddenly all was mist far and near, neither sky nor mountain nor water could be seen, and one deep long roar of thunder pealed along the range of heights from end to end. A furious wind and torrents of rain ensued, which, lasting only a few minutes, were succeeded by a brilliant evening, a glorious sunset, and the moonlight which followed made the night

> " . . . . a day,
> Such as the day is when the sun is hid."

The time came when we were to leave the delightful retreat of Bellaggio, and a small row-boat was accordingly hired, by means of which we were

to explore the shores which lie between that point and Varenna. The morning at six o'clock was beautiful bright and warm, the waters calm, and the sky as clear as if no disturbance had taken place the night before. On we floated, pausing here and there at the most striking spots, which occurred so frequently that we were long before we could get to Varenna. There is infinite variety in this part of the lake, which turns its course here towards Lecco. The rock of Colungo, part of the Serbeloni property, rises out of the waves in great majesty: its deep, dark caverns blackening the face of the cliff, and its summit crowned with hanging woods: the morning breeze blew gently as we stopped to observe the fine scene around, and the aspect of all nature at this still but cheerful hour, was most inspiriting: behind the rock, and partly concealed by the thick foliage, gushed forth a cascade which throws its sheets of foam from projecting ledges till it reaches the lake. It is called, poetically, Fiumilatte—white as the foam of milk. The boatmen spoke of the virtues and benevolence of the brothers Serbeloni, who spent their fortunes on their charming estate, and did much good in their neighbourhood: they are both very aged, and it is to be feared that their career of useful kindness is nearly coming to a close. Their neighbours of the Palazzo Melzi, where I had spent so many pleasant hours, are young and wealthy, but sickness has attacked the fair creature who is the mistress of the domain, and her life seemed to hang

by a fragile thread: so unsubstantial are the shows of the world: as shifting as the ever varying scenes on this beautiful lake.

If I had been delighted with Bellaggio, my admiration of the still more lovely shores of Varenna, almost effaced for a time the recollection of its charms.

This fairy village of palaces lies at the foot of a bold rock; its dwellings either hanging on terraces or dipping their marble steps into the water. A long and imposing edifice is shewn as the Convent where St. Carlo Borromeo once slept; it occupies the most conspicuous place with its gardens of orange and lemon trees, its pyramidal cypresses and cedars behind. The high slender tower of the church, and the houses embowered in trees lay all reflected in the mirror beneath: groves stretched far up the height, and the rugged naked rock, which rises above all, is crowned by the majestic ruins of its once proud castle, of which only one tower remains apparently entire.

Our boat stopped at the steps of the hotel where we were to breakfast, and there we landed amidst a wilderness of flowers and oriental shrubs; a huge aloe threw its thick prickly arms above the parapet wall and numerous specimens of cactus in flower peeped from the stony barrier. Jasmine bowers, garlands of red roses, myrtles, pines, cedars, greeted us as we went on our steep way to the hotel by a series of precipitous steps.

For more than an hour we wandered about amidst the gardens of the two beautiful hotels which are perched on these inviting heights, and hardly could I resolve to quit their perfumed vistas. Indeed I think such a piece of philosophy would have been impossible to me, had I not comforted myself with a suddenly formed resolution to return at some future period, with the companions without whom I had never before travelled, and here, faithless even to Bellaggio, for a summer long to

"melt all life away,"

in the orange groves of Varenna. A suite of rooms in a pavilion hanging over the lake, in the very midst of the gardens, and removed from the bustle of the hotel, was the temple I devoted to this pleasant duty, and having satisfied my mind with a dream, never probably to be realized, I was content to hear that the breakfast of hot coffee, delicious milk and bread and fresh *agones* whose silver scales had probably a few minutes before glittered in the lake, was awaiting our return.

With books and friends in such a retreat as this who could not pass a happy summer existence?—Such the younger Pliny enjoyed near this very spot, but since Ugo Foscolo has said it is impossible to *study* on the lake of Como, all works severer than those of the poets may be banished, and for those who are not so unfortunate as to despise the Muse, might not Varenna be indeed a Paradise?

"Malheur à qui n'aime pas les poètes! je dirais

presques d'eux ce que dit Shakespeare des hommes insensibles à l'harmonie."

Alas! as our little boat bore us away from these enchanting shores and I gazed on the ruins of the feudal castle which still commands the mountains, I felt inclined to pursue Chateaubriand's sentimental reflection and add:

"Elles ne sont déja plus pour moi, ces ruines, puis qu'il est probable que rien ne m'y amenera. On meurt à chaque moment pour un temps, une chose, une personne qu'on ne reverra jamais: la vie est une morte successive."

I was shewn in the kitchen of the rival hotel to that we had chosen, two portraits painted in fresco on the wall of what doubtless formed part of the castle, to judge by its thickness and the general style of the chamber. These are said to represent two powerful lords of Varenna, the dukes of Serra-pontis, and the date they bear is that of 1313: they have aspects grim and solemn, and no doubt knew how to keep their vassals in proper order: there must have been fewer orange groves and terraces of roses in their day, but in their stead bristling fortifications guarded the steep ascent, some part of which yet remaining, we explored till we could climb no higher for heat and weariness, and for a time I abandoned my love of ruined castles, for the, to me, more novel enjoyment of the rose garden.

Perhaps it was of these feudal lords that the following anecdote is related by Amelot de la Houssaye.

"One of the Da Ponte family was at feud with another, the Canale: both were of Venice, and alluding to the many bridges and canals there, the proud Da Ponte boasted that the *Bridges* were far above the *Canals:* the insulted rival replied scornfully that the canals of the city of the sea, were in existence long before the bridges were thought of. So high rose the dispute on this point, that the Senate was obliged to interfere, and to inform the disputants that Venice had the power at its pleasure to fill up the canals and to destroy the bridges."

Perhaps the Duke de Serra-pontis retired in disgust to his strong castle of Como to digest the interference as he might.

The magnificent military road which has not long been completed over the Stelvio pass, runs at the back of Varenna, and the galleries here are stupendous.

This wondrous work of art, equal to those of Napoleon, has been constructed in order that no impediment might prevent an army marching over the snowy heights from Germany, in case the Milanese assert their liberties too strenuously.

There are still Dukes of Serra Pontis in the land!

CHAPTER XII.

THE CARRIAGE AND DRIVER—MENAGGIO—ROAD TO PORLEZZA—THE YOUNG CURÉS—LAGO LUGANO—SONG OF THE OLD BELL—THE MARINAIO—WEDDING SONG—IL PAESE LIBERO—LUGANO—MONTE CENERE—MAGADINO—GIGANTIC CHAMBERS—FROG-CONCERT—THE "PRETTY ISLAND"—REPUBLICAN INDEPENDENCE.

It is five miles to Menaggio across the lake, and thither we directed our way as we proposed hiring a carriage there to take us across the country to the Lake of Lugano: we were not long in procuring one, which though unique in form was very comfortable and answered our purpose perfectly well: it was such a contrivance as Cinderella's godmother might have put together before her wand changed it into something better: the body might be likened to half an egg-shell and for an awning four props with a drapery drawn across were nailed at each corner, the other half of the egg-shell placed in front supported the driver and the courier under whose experienced guidance we placed ourselves on our expeditions.

The youth who had secured us as tenants of his little vehicle, seemed in high spirits at his triumph over his fellows, for he had many rivals at Menaggio; he assured us that the strangely shaped but inge-

nious machine was perfection itself, having been arranged under his especial direction, and that his horses were the fleetest and the best in the country, as indeed their speed went far to prove. While we waited in our boat till negociations were concluded, we had leisure to observe the village at whose port we were moored and very remarkable was its aspect, telling of former importance by its now decayed buildings and towers. The church presents, towards the lake, a temple-like apsis, which must formerly have been dedicated to some Pagan worship: its fluted pilasters support a circular dome now tiled and ruinous: this part, indeed, seems unused for sacred purposes, as newer buildings and a high tower rise close behind it, retaining still some traces of their antique origin.

We set forth with our lively good looking conductor, who from time to time, as he drove on, turned back courteously to see that we were well accommodated in his Phœnix of carriages, which he rejoiced to hear was perfectly easy and unexceptionable. It was not long before we discovered that our new acquaintance was the *cugino* of the pale pretty heiress of Bellaggio, who it seems had named to our courier the probability of his encountering her relative on the quay at Menaggio: he was faithful to his trust, and to judge by the sparkle of our new friend's eye it was possible that some exclusive message might have been delivered by the messenger from *la bella cugina*.

We learnt that this carriage and the fine pair of horses which drew it were not the only possession of the favoured youth, and I immediately filled up the blanks of my knowledge with the romance of the union of this handsome pair and the extreme likelihood of their setting up an hotel in some beautiful corner of the Lake of Lugano which is less well provided in that particular than Como.

The drive was extremely agreeable, by a pretty cross road amongst vines and olive gardens, with fine views of the lake we were leaving behind. Pretty lanes and fertile meadows made the country one continued garden, and the numerous wild flowers were so luxuriant that they enamelled every bank and field as we passed. Hearing our expressions of admiration, the conductor, delighted at the praises of his native hills, suddenly stopped his horses beneath a spreading shade, and leaping over a wall disappeared in a moment, returning quickly with his hands full of heart-shaped leaves and rich lilac flowers with a perfume like the tuberose.

"Ecco del' pomporsino!" he exclaimed as he presented them, and we recognized a charming specimen of the cyclamen, which grew wild on these delightful mountains.

The whole way to Porlezza was equally pleasant: we passed through many picturesque villages, much neater than any we had seen, and I was struck with the peculiarly fine heads of the peasantry and their resemblance to so many of Raphael's speaking portraits:

one young man in particular who came to the carriage to greet our driver, might have been a living model of the mighty master. The dignified courtesy of manner of all these peasants is pleasing in the extreme: it is too remarkable to escape observation, and all travellers must be favourably impressed with it.

As we proceeded through one village, we received a bow from a person whose calling we did not at first recognize, but were told afterwards that he was the curé. He was a fine handsome man dressed in black, but walking al fresco without his coat, which he carried: his greeting to our driver was familiar and kind, and he appeared to be received with affection by several persons who ran out of their cottages to see him.

"He is an excellent man," said our friend, "and does not belong to the Jesuits who are always making mischief at Turin: we have none of them here now. I will shew you a village soon where an awkward thing happened, owing to the over-strictness of the clergy. There were two young curés, living not far from each other in the mountains, who used occasionally to come to the village to visit an old lady who had a pretty villa there: she was always delighted to see them and made good cheer whenever they came: they were both capital fellows, with no pride or severity in their dispositions, and were adored in their parishes, but one day there was a great fête, and they found it so warm that they had taken

a little more than usual of the hostess's wine at dinner, and coming out with her to look at the young men and girls dancing under the vines, they were so pleased that they quite forgot, and so did everybody else, that priests ought not to dance, and jumping up they sprang amongst the performers, selected their partners, and footed it away to the admiration of all the world. It was however an unlucky pastime for them, for some ill-natured person represented it to the Bishop, and they were both removed from their parishes and have not been allowed to return."

Arrived at Porlezza our next adventure was to be the *trajet* to Lugano, a row of twelve miles across the Lake. A boat was hired, and we took our stations under its pretty awning with our three boatmen, one of whom, an elderly intelligent-looking man, seemed the highest in command and imparted all the information we requested with alacrity and apparent pleasure.

Our passports were examined at Porlezza, as we should have to enter the precincts of Switzerland, a circumstance I heard with pleasure, as I did not imagine at that time that I should make a more intimate acquaintance with that land of the sage and free.

The day continued propitious, the wind was fresh and pleasant, the sun powerful, and the sky without a cloud; the water of the lake was of a rich transparent green like the sea, and the strength of its current was pointed out to us by the boatmen, who

told us that they were rowing both against the current and the wind, which explained the exertion they were forced to use. The whole scene offered a great contrast to Como; though little less beautiful, the shores of Lugano are much wilder, and the villas are less numerous, there is however no want of gardens and vine-terraces, which are carefully protected from the violence of the water by strong stone parapets, which look like fortifications.

Grand and imposing are the wild rocks which frown above the clear and sparkling waves, and strange and menacing are their forms, as they rise over the carefully cultivated lands which climb up in rich terraces of verdure to an almost incredible height, triumphing over the stony and rugged soil which industry has rendered fertile. Yet nature has her fitful moments of productiveness in certain spots, and Monte Generosa is so called because of the medicinal herbs it produces in abundance.

The bays and headlands we passed were full of majestic beauty, and the position of some of the villages, with the lofty belfry of their churches, is remarkably fine. That of Santa Maria della Salute, placed on a magnificent height and defended with strong walls is a very imposing object both as the voyager approaches and recedes from it.

Our head boatman, as we passed Santa Maria, began, in a low tone, to chant to himself, what I

supposed to be a hymn in honour of the Madonna, which circumstance, from its extreme rarity, in these parts, attracted my attention, but I soon found that he was trying to remember some lines, written by a Milanese poet on the erection of this fine new church, supposed to be the lamentation of the old bell, as he said, 'a primo de morire.'

The air was plaintive, and a few words I caught seemed pretty and reflective, but the singer tried in vain to recall them, and they remained imperfect.

SONG OF THE OLD BELL.

Circling Alps! ye hear the wail
Of Saint Mary's bell;
Hark! upon the sobbing gale,
Rings the funeral knell.

Soon, my latest murmur past,
I shall sigh no more,
Silent on the list'ning blast,
Silent on the shore.

Dumb on wild Lugano's waves
That shall mourn in vain,
Mute in Salvatore's caves,
Ne'er to wake again.

Heard no more on Cima's brow,
Where, her elm beside,
Meet the council even now,
And her laws decide.

Heard not, when the surges beat,
Swelling loud and high,
Where the echoing rocks repeat
Songs of liberty.

Monte Rosa, 'midst the skies,
Shall no more rejoice,
That above her crest should rise,
My accustomed voice.

Dark Caprino and her cells,
Ask another tone,
When to San Lorenzo's bells,
They reply alone.

Holy Mary's glories all
Other voices tell,
Silence and oblivion's pall,
Closes o'er her bell.

I praised his singing and endeavoured to lead him on to indulge me with more melody, but at first he was reserved and shy; however, in a short time, as we passed new scenes of beauty, he appeared to become animated and inspired, and as he rowed accompanied every stroke of his oar with a song, which seemed improvised. He would occasionally break off to point out with enthusiastic gestures, some charming attractive scene; now it was the craggy peaks of *Salvatore*, now the *Bella Scolio*, now *Il monte passo stretto*, and then he would desire us to admire the colour and the depth of his beautiful and unrivalled lake, 'sixteen hundred feet

deep,' strongly impregnated with iron, and very beneficial to the constitution when drunk, according to his report.

I asked him, now that he was fairly warmed into verse and melody, to sing me some ballad of the country, and after launching forth into praises of the seraphic voice of his countryman Rubini, of whom he seemed an adorer, and regretting his own voice was less charming, he began to warble with considerable taste, an extremely pretty lay of a 'giorno de nozze,' setting forth the beauties of the bride with the "piccola manina" and the delights "della cara, della cara gioventù," the melodious language supplying much of the charm of the subject.

WEDDING SONG.

The maid with the little hand
To-day is made a bride:
A wreath of snowy roses
Around her brow is tied.

There are roses in her path,
And on her cheeks are more,
And her tiny foot is pressing
Red leaves that strew the shore.

Our bark is full of flowers,
But we have left a place
For the maiden and the bridegroom—
They take but little space.

Her boddice is all decked
With gold and pearls so rare
And silver pins are shining
Amidst her glossy hair.

The happy hours fleet fast
Of youth's delicious spring,
It leaves the tender nightingale
But little time to sing!

There are clouds that come so quickly
Over summer's tranquil sky,
You must take the blissful minutes
Nor give them time to fly.

Our bark has waited long,
The blue waves beat the strand—
Let us sing the bridal carol
For the maid with the little hand.

From the time that his shyness had become dispelled by encouragement, our *marinaio* did not cease his songs, in the chorus of which he was occasionally assisted by his hitherto silent brethren who had taken no part in the conversation. Occasionally he stopped from hoarseness, and sometimes to shew us a passing wonder, and just as we were nearing the Swiss frontier, with the custom-house in sight, we turned a promontory which brought us close to a lovely spot where a series of palaces, embowered in thick groves, ran up to a pyramid above the lake, the high tower and dome of a church surmounting the group; a small strip of land detached from the shore bore a single *salice pian-*

gendo, opposite to which, hanging over a garden wall, our minstrel bade us admire the *legna de rossa* whose crimson feathery fibres were waving in the increasing breeze, and the thick cluster of roses which fell in festoons almost into the water.

Without interrupting his song he changed the air to one of Rosini's, and guided the boat close to the shore, when he made a sign to one of the other boatmen to cut a branch of roses and present them to the ladies. This piece of gallantry performed, he rowed away and we stopped a few moments at the Custom House to undergo the slight examination, necessary before we were allowed to proceed.

"Siete," he exclaimed, "in paese libero!" and we had, he proclaimed, entered the land of William Tell.

Once in a free land, our boatman seemed to think he might express his opinions freely, and accordingly launched forth in praises of Eugene Beauharnais, his especial favourite, whose noble spirit and kind heart he extolled extremely, and insisted that the Milanese had never flourished so well as under his government.

While thus occupied with poetry and politics, we became sensible of a sudden change in the weather, and as we had every day experienced the same at the same hour, we were prepared for the approach of the "temporale" which we continually heard announced: on one occasion the waiter at one inn gave it as his opinion that the sky 'must be so

tired of raining and changing, that it could not choose but be fixed at last.'

There was time for no more songs, for our boatmen were obliged to

"bend strongly to their oars"

in order to reach Lugano, now in sight, before the gale increased. The usual mists began to gather and to veil the tops of the mountains: one by one the high peaks disappeared, the thunder growled and the wind sighed menacingly amongst the rocks: the green waves rolled high with crests of white foam, and we began to feel a little apprehension, particularly as we had often heard that in cases of danger, the boatmen on these lakes often throw away their oars, abandon their sail and occupy themselves in entreaties to the Virgin. This however, fortunately, was not our case, the promise of an increased *buono-mano* stimulated our friends, and we made our way against the wind gallantly.

The town of Lugano is finely situated, and commands a splendid view of the Alpine range: its hills are dotted with villas and it has a flourishing appearance, but it is by no means interesting in itself, and we were not induced to linger there long: as soon as a violent shower with thunder and lightning, had cleared the air, we quitted the large room in which we had taken shelter, where we had had leisure to contemplate its enormous chimney piece decorated with elaborate sculpture, and took leave of our faithful conductors, who stood in a row

with many smiles and bows while we got into a hired carriage destined to take us on to Magadino on the Lago Maggiore, the port whence the steamboat starts on the daily excursion of the lake.

The drive was extremely pleasant for some time; the country finely cultivated, and the scenery and productions still Italian, although the manners of the free people were quite different, their superiority manifesting itself in a cessation of the courtesy which we had so much admired of late.

Not a peasant touched his hat or gave a glance of cheerful greeting: a Yankee rudeness, singularly opposite to the careless independence of English freemen, made itself instantly felt, and I could not but regret that liberty, admirable in itself, should disdain the polish which could only adorn its worth, without injuring its purity in any way.

The cattle with bells which we met in this route continually reminded us, and more agreeably, of being in Switzerland.

Following the course of a foaming mountain torrent, we passed along finely cultivated fields, a storm still threatening, but kept off by the struggling sun, whose fitful gleams made the mountains and valleys more beautiful by their uncertain light.

We crossed the Monte Cenere by the fine zigzag road which winds and turns amongst forests in a most surprising manner, allowing occasional views of the glorious mountains and the broad valley of the Ticino far below, with the wide sea of Maggiore

spreading out an extended sheet of silver, defended on each side by bold and precipitous rocks.

We descended to the marshy banks of the Ticino, and arrived at Magadino without having encountered any adventure from brigands, the race of whom is extinct on the once dangerous pass of Monte Cenere.

The inn at which we slept is of the most stupendous character, a circumstance rather surprising, as before steam-boats were established on the lake, Lucarno, on the opposite shore, was the spot of most importance; and considering the unhealthy and uninteresting position of the dirty little town of Magadino, one would imagine few travellers, except from necessity, would choose it for a halting place.

There are, however, rival hotels here, and both are on a gigantic scale. Although, by this time, accustomed to the spaciousness of the chambers in the hotels of Italy, I was startled at the dimensions of that in which I found myself, the more so as it was approached by a dark narrow staircase.

Three, *en suite*, were accorded us, and it seemed really a work of time to travel from one to the other: every room had, at least, three doors, not one of which would shut close, and several hung by one enormous rusty hinge. Titans and giants only seemed suitable denizens of these exalted chambers, where I felt my insignificance extreme, as I vainly set myself to the work of closing some of the huge portals which defied my feeble efforts. The bed

which reared its monstrous form in the centre of the room would have held five persons with ease, and three enormous windows reached from the ceiling to the floor, and looked forth upon the marshy corner of the lake where Magadino lies.

A deafening sound, as if of ten thousand spinning wheels in motion, prevented any thing approaching to sleep all night, for, without cessation, myriads of frogs, doubtless of larger size than in any other spot in Europe, kept up a concert able to chase rest from the most wearied traveller that ever took refuge in this melancholy nook. The night was excessively hot, but it was impossible to have the windows open, and in any case that might have been imprudent, as the place has a reputation for malaria, not undeserved.

The master of the hotel, like most of the innkeepers here, speaks English, and amused me in the morning as he conducted us to the steamer, by recommending to our especial attention his "pretty island," for so he translated for our behoof the *Isola bella*, one of the chief lions of the lake.

The morning was grey and damp, as some rain had fallen during the night, and when we took our stations on board the steamer, on the wet deck, we looked about for some stool or chair on which to place our feet. Having taken possession of two camp stools we turned them on their sides and thus defended ourselves from the danger of catching cold by contact with the damp boards. A consequential

looking personage gaily dressed, who had been leisurely walking backwards and forwards amongst the few passengers, smoking his cigar which he unceremoniously puffed in every one's face as he passed, now approached us, and, with a frown, stooped down and snatched the stools from under our feet, exclaiming in an imperative tone that they were to sit on and not for other purposes.

I remonstrated that the decks were wet, but the captain, for such our polite new Swiss acquaintance turned out to be, was inexorable. Our English attendant here came to the rescue and insisted on some substitute being provided, remarking somewhat sharply on the want of civility displayed.

This struck me as a bad specimen of the manners of William Tell's countrymen, and I looked back towards the mountains which concealed Lugano and Como with a sigh for the beautiful language and charming courtesy lost for a time, but I rejoiced to think, shortly to be found again on our return, after the wonders of Maggiore had been explored.

Meantime, as the day brightened and the sun dried the decks, we forgot our disgust at the captain in the scenery which opened around us. The character of Lago Maggiore is very different from that of the others we had seen: vaster and grander, it struck me as being less beautiful than Como and less interesting in its wildness than Lugano, nevertheless it possesses great attractions, and if seen first, would be, perhaps, more justly appreciated than

after having enjoyed the delights of its attractive neighbours.

We were not fortunate in the sky, for clouds obscured the snowy peaks of Monte Rosa, who had always been coy with us along the whole line of country we had travelled. The nearer hills, however, are grand and imposing, and the bays and promontories in the lake very fine, continually disclosing fresh objects of interest.

CHAPTER XIII.

BERNABO AND GALEAZZO VISCONTI—THE MEETING—LA MADONNA DEL SASSO—THE APPARITION—THE CHURCH—CASTELLO CARDINALE—BORROMEAN ISLANDS—ARONA AND THE STATUE—BAVENO—ISOLA BELLA—MARTINA OF LAVENO—ROUTE TO COMO—COMO REVISITED.

As long as we were in the upper part of the Langen See, or Lago di Locarno, we were still in Switzerland, after that, Italy claims the lake as her own; Austria and Sardinia dividing its shores.

We paused a few moments at Locarno, one of the chief towns of the district of Tessin; it is finely situated, and looks well with its churches rising above the orange and myrtle groves which embosom the town. Above, on a height, stands a remarkable building, very conspicuous from the lake, and held in great veneration by the Catholic population. Fourteen stations lead up to it, all of which are clearly seen amongst their surrounding woods. This is the famous church of La Madonna del Sasso, visited by pilgrims for many an age, and freshly restored by modern devotion.

It was to this shrine that Giovanni Galeazzo Visconti, in the 14th century, proceeded in order to lull to rest the suspicions of his uncle Bernabo of

Milan, with whom he shared the sovereignty of Lombardy; and here he offered up his vows, not of piety, but for a successful issue to the daring adventure on which he was bent.

Galeazzo quitted Pavia in gallant array, for no less than two thousand horse accompanied him on his pilgrimage. Bernabo heard with contempt of the powerful guard with which he surrounded himself, persuaded that cowardice dictated his caution, and when his more suspicious friends suggested the necessity of wary observation of his movements, the uncle replied that he was too great a saint to be treacherous. "My nephew," said he, "is by no means of a warlike disposition—he loves priests better than soldiers, and a rosary better than a sword; his days are occupied in pilgrimages, and his nights in penance; he is not a foe whom I need dread."

His dutiful and pious relative could not approach Milan so nearly without paying his respects to the uncle who trusted him so well; accordingly, after his devotions were paid, the meek Galeazzo, with all his numerous train, directed his steps to the great city, and was met by Bernabo, his two sons, and a few attendants only. The relations embraced and uttered mutual expressions of friendliness, though Bernabo, in his heart, as he looked at his two sons, wished that the heritage of his nephew was already annexed to theirs. What the secret thoughts of Galeazzo were a few minutes disclosed;

turning to one of his confidential followers, Giacopo del Verone, he gave a certain sign, agreed on between them, and a powerful hand was laid on the bridle of the mule ridden by the unsuspicious Bernabo—his sword was instantly cut from his belt, and he was dragged to the ground. As swift as the action of a Thug towards his guest, men at arms, who stood behind each of the sons of Bernabo, performed the same service for their chief, and the three prisoners were hurried off to a dungeon already prepared for their reception.

For seven months the unfortunate Bernabo languished in chains in the castle of Frezzo, without an effort on the part of his subjects, now servants of the usurper, for his release. He had been tyrannous and oppressive, and neither love nor regrets followed him to his last home, where poison at length did its work, and Galeazzo was freed of a rival in the power he coveted.

La Madonna del Sasso had probably many such devotees in those turbulent times, and in the following century she looked down from her height with sorrow on the devastations committed by the five robber brothers, Mazzarda, who made the lake over which she presided a scene of rapine and horror, when they sallied forth from their island fastness and fell upon travellers on shore. Perhaps she repented her that she had chosen such a spot, since her influence, could not repress such outrages, and would fain, but for pity, have retired from the retreat she had herself fixed upon.

It was late on a calm and beautiful summer evening, so tranquil and so pure that one would fancy no storms ever visited the spot,—

> "All was so still, so soft in earth and air,
> You scarce would start to meet a spirit there,
> Secure that nought of evil could delight,
> To walk in such a scene, on such a night,"

when a young shepherdess of Locarno was returning over the mountains, having folded her sheep, and was watching with innocent pleasure the last golden rays that gilded the lake at her feet; as she gazed she was aware of a figure in white garments sitting on a stone which lay in the path before her. She paused a moment in surprise, for, although so close, she had not seen the stranger a moment before: while, impressed with sudden awe, she hesitated to advance, the figure turned on her a face of extreme sweetness, and, raising an almost transparent hand, through which the sun-gleams seemed to shine, beckoned her to come forward. She did so, and stood before a female of the most exquisite beauty, whose eyes had

> "The steady aspect of a clear large star;"

a crown of gold was on her head and confined her long tresses which glittered as much as the diadem which bound them, and her form was enveloped in robes of a texture which seemed formed from one of the soft white clouds hovering above the lake—such as it afterwards appeared to the votaries of the Vir-

gin, for her robe enriched the shrine of Locarno.—
"Maria," said the figure in a gentle voice,

> "touched
> To an aerial sweetness, like soft music
> Over a tract of waters,"

"you are pure as I myself was when on earth; to you I confide my wish. Let a church be erected on this spot in honour of the Virgin of the Stone."

Maria heard the words distinctly, but she no longer saw the speaker, and, in strange perturbation of spirit, she descended the mountain and sought her home. That night she slept not, neither did she dare to tell what she had seen, convinced that her story would not be credited and she would be chidden for falsehood. She returned to her accustomed duties the next day and ruminated on the strange event, till she came to the determination of obeying the command she had received from the holy visitant, happen what might. She had reached the spot where the great stone lay, formerly part of a rude temple raised for infidel worship, when, as she gazed intently, it seemed to her as if a light cloud descended on it which, clearing away, disclosed to view the same celestial form that had appeared to her before. She saw the same looks, she heard the same words, and the figure again disappeared. She descended the mountain, strong in her resolution, hurried at once to the convent where she had been nurtured in her infancy, and there told of the wondrous vision.

Maria never was seen again on the mountain tending sheep, but her voice might often afterwards be heard, the sweetest in the choir of holy maidens, who sang the praises of the Virgin in the church of La Madonna del Sasso, which soon crowned the height above Lucarno.

The Castello Cardinale, placed on a rock which stands isolated nearly in the centre of the lake, has a most magnificent and imposing effect, seen from all sides: the fortress commands the whole watery expanse, and no doubt, in troubled times, was most important, as it is now most beautiful, with its guardian mountains crowding round. After the little manufacturing town of Intra is passed, the most striking features of the lake come forth.

Here the fine opening towards the Simplon pass spreads out in infinite grandeur, and the eye is dazzled by the brilliancy of the white marble quarry of Monte Palanza, worked for five hundred years, whence the materials were taken to build that most amazing of all edifices, the gorgeous Duomo of Milan.

The far famed Borromean islands, that gem the Lago Maggiore, and have been so often sung and painted, the Isola Bella and its protecting Madre with the attendant Pescatore, now came in sight, and very beautiful they look, rising out of the blue waters, their terraces and temples and gardens gleaming in the lucid mirror. As we drew nearer, however, the charm was much dispelled, for on the

Isola Madre, shines an immense white building, whose ugliness nothing can mask, and which has all the appearance of a penitentiary, though it is probably a manufactory, which is as little poetical or graceful.

It requires evening and its beautifying light to make these islands lovely, or they should be seen by moonlight, when nothing can exceed the charming effect they produce: I afterwards beheld them by both, and carried away with me a recollection far more pleasing than their aspect in the full glare of the noonday sun allowed.

Their position, with a glorious range of mountains opposite touched with a thousand beauties of light and shade, and the immense width of the sea-like lake, on which they seem to float like water flowers, is the most exquisite that can be imagined, and one cannot wonder at the taste which embellished one of them, once a barren rock, with gardens, statues, and a palace.

In six hours and a half, after leaving Magadino in the morning, we arrived at Arona, where we landed, having been betrayed into a desire to see the gigantic statue of St. Carlo Borromeo closer than from the lake. This, in hot weather, is a great mistake, as the fatigue of mounting the high hill where the bronze saint stands overlooking the country for leagues, is intolerable, at least I found it so, for the sun was intensely hot, and not a cloud was in the sky to relieve the continued glare. The

view is extremely fine from the utmost height, but I think it quite as much so from the road beneath, where we met our carriage, after a tremendous struggle to the summit and a strange scramble down again through woods and vineyards, by an almost perpendicular path which was extremely pretty, and but for the scorching heat, would have been enjoyable.

We had engaged a carriage from Arona to take us back to Baveno, in order that we might see the scenery better by land than by returning in the steam boat; our driver had mistaken his orders and failed to meet us at the foot of San Carlo's mountain, so that we had to wait for his arrival under some clustering vines at the door of a proprietor's cottage, while our vehicle was sent for. Such a spot as we were placed in would have been indeed delicious if a cool breeze had been wafted from the azure waters far below, or if a cloud had for a time shaded the fierceness of the glare. Seldom afterwards had we occasion to complain of the summer's heat, which was confined to a brief portion of the season this year, but I never recollect to have felt anything equal to the sun's power on that day when exposed to it for several hours.

At length we heard the welcome sound of wheels, and gladly resumed our journey by a charming road, presenting new beauties at every turn, as it skirted the lake, now high above, now descending

towards those transparent blue waters whose hue is so attractive to the eye.

After remaining to dine at Baveno, where we recognised some English travellers, usually a common occurrence, but one by no means so this year owing to the unpropitious spring, we engaged a boat to take us to the islands, and to carry us across to Laveno, where we proposed sleeping. The evening was delightful, and a cool breeze rippled the surface of the waters, changing their tints of sapphire to emerald. We rowed round the Three Sisters, and stopped our boat at the flight of steps of the Borromeo palace in the Isola Bella.

This fine place is neglected and deserted now, and except for its position, has little claim to attention. The terraced gardens with their marble balustrades, and rows of statues and vases, are formal in the extreme, and their plan is in a taste gone by: nevertheless there is a certain beauty about the whole, which suits the climate and the scene, and it would be worth while to renew or remodel it; the flowers and shrubs, once unique and surprising no longer excite interest from their novelty or their beauty, for they present scarcely any specimens which are not familiarly known in English gardens and none are the first of their class. A camphor tree is an exception, which flourishes well, and is a curiosity, and some lemons and oranges were hanging against a sunny wall, trained like peach trees, Some fine pine trees of great height embellish a

thick grove, and numerous dark cypresses lift up their spiral points amongst the white statues, all looking better from the lake, and at a distance, than close. The laurel which Napoleon is said to have inscribed remains, a magnificent tree, but the traces of the inscription are very faint.

I was, on the whole, rather pleased than disappointed with the Isola Bella, for I had heard it too often dispraised to expect it to present the beauties for which in its early years it had been famed. The character I heard of its owner, was so excellent, that the 'pretty island' gained infinitely by association with his name.

It would seem, by the enthusiastic encomiums of our boatman, that the family of Borromeo transmit their virtues from father to son, and have done so for many years, since the time of the benevolent San Carlo to the heirs of the present day. The poor are constantly employed by the reigning Count, who spends his large fortune in ceaseless acts of goodness and charity.

Nothing can be more enjoyable than the row across the lake to Laveno, and we arrived in time to escape the storm, whose approach had freshened the breeze on our way.

Laveno is a quiet little place with a very good inn. A pretty young girl of sixteen, who told us her name was Martina, attended us, assisted by a stout young woman who wore the beautiful auriole of silver pins. Martina told me she never thus adorned her own

shining hair, as she considered it a dirty practice, found the pins heavy and inconvenient, "and besides," said she, "they are the costume of the peasants." I thought her charming head would have looked particularly well with the addition, but as it is considered *vulgar*, no doubt the graceful fashion will before long be discontinued.

We enjoyed the moonlight on the lake and the distant mountains for a time, but the "sempre temporale!" put an end to our pleasure, except at intervals.

I slept in a chamber which opened as several others did, on to a balcony, surrounding the house on three sides and overlooking the lake: a somewhat unmusical concert under my windows prevented my retiring while the moon was still visible, and I was at length awakened from my first sleep by a thundering sound, as if all the ice of the neighbouring mountains had been sent down against the hotel. A furious storm of hail was indeed battering the town of Laveno and the noise it made, heard in the intervals of the loud thunder peals, was appalling.

The next morning I looked out and found a thick veil of fog spread far and wide over the lake and mountains, so that not an inch of water could be seen. As our intention was to return to Como that day, we were somewhat annoyed at the little prospect we had of fine weather across the mountains: we set out in a soft rain, but had not proceeded far before the sun changed the gloom into cheerfulness and

rendered our drive pleasant. All the roads in this region are admirable, and this between Laveno and Como is as good as any; the country full of smiling beauty and grandeur alternating in continued variety.

Again, and for many leagues on our route, we were amused with the sight of the mulberry-leaf gatherers, perched like large birds in the naked trees which they were stripping, and filling their gracefully shaped suspended baskets with the spoil.

We entered Como by a new road and thus had an opportunity of seeing the fine old town under several aspects: nothing can be more imposing than the immense ivy-covered walls and the broad ditch of defence, now luxuriantly filled with delicate acacias: massive and grand and threatening rise the lofty and stupendous towers which once had to stand many a siege directed against them by the envious Milanese, who during the greatest part of the twelfth century were bitter foes of the bold, hardy and valiant Comaschi, who in their love of independence, partook a great deal of the nature of their neighbours the Swiss.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE DEMONSTRATIVE KNIFE VENDOR—THE SILK-WORKERS OF SAN MARTINO—THE RESIGONE—THE WONDER AT LECCO—THE HOTEL—STORM—PALAZZUOLO—THE THREE FAT GRACES—BRESCIA—THE FAME—MUSEUM—PLINY—MORETTO—LAGO DI GARDA—DEZENZANO—MILTON AND BYRON.

We remained but a short time at Como to resume our baggage and carriage, which had been left there during our exploring trip. Once more I entered the town to look again at the Cathedral and San Fedele. As I paused under the antique arcades I was amused bythe clamorous vociferations of a vendor of knives who occupied the centre of the street. He was a man of gigantic stature and wild countenance, and his dress was as wild as his expression: he wore a white cap with a handkerchief rolled round it in turban form, had a showy waistcoat and his coat hanging over his shoulder in the Irish fashion not unusual in these regions, white stockings and sabots with leather tips for the toes. He bore a long pole with a cross piece at the top pierced with holes in which was placed a formidable row of open knives of all sizes, some of stiletto shape and some for hunter's use as well as for the board. Thus armed, with all his wares in evidence, he stalked boldly on, proclaiming at the top of his voice the virtues of his goods, while the clamour he made caused every one to look up at

his extraordinary travelling shop, which he flourished above his head making the fierce blades shimmer in the sun.

It was market day at Como and the streets were much embellished by the quantity of fruit and flowers displayed on the pavement and the bright coloured cotton handkerchiefs of the market women, together with their shining silver pins newly arranged for the important occasion.

Our destination was now to Lecco, on the other arm of the lake of Como, and we began our agreeable drive late in the afternoon of a beautiful day, such as invariably succeeded the storm of the night before. The high hill above Como, on this route, is crowned by an imposing looking building of great extent, the silk manufactory of San Martino, hurrying towards which we observed groups of very young girls who were mounting the height from the neighbouring villages. The sun was extremely powerful, and the walk seemed sufficiently toilsome to these little damsels who trudged along by the side of the carriage for some distance, their heads covered with large cotton handkerchiefs of the most brilliant hues, their legs naked, and feet defended by sabots with leather toes: many of them had red and fair hair, and they were generally much more Swiss or German in their complexions than Italian.

From the hill of San Martino, the town, the Duomo and the port of Como have a good effect,

and the scenery round is beautiful in the extreme. The road presents many objects of interest and all is richness and cultivation. Villas, finely built, adorned with luxuriant gardens, occur frequently, evidences of riches and comfort, such as are seldom met with out of England.

We passed through several decayed towns which must once have been of importance, and more than one antique ruined tower told of former strength and the warfare of days gone by.

On a sudden, after we had surmounted a high hill, our road began to descend, and shining brightly in the declining sun, rose before us a fine alp, glittering with glaciers, and below it a row of lower hills of strange forms clearly defined against the blue background. Through vineyards, and by enclosed gardens full of flowers, we went on, and arrived at a village, the streets of which were so narrow that it appeared at first impossible to pass: huge ruined towers and thick crumbling walls, told of its former consequence, and how this mountain hold must once have been attacked and defended before either Como or Lecco could have been approached by an enemy.

Before us, for some time, I had observed a series of notched rocks which rose like a wall, as if in our path, at a distance: but, as the sky had become shadowed by hurrying clouds, I imagined my sight was deceived by their descent on the mountains, to which, perhaps, they had given this remarkable appearance. As, however, I watched the effect,

expecting a change, I perceived that this extraordinary range was indeed such as I had imagined it, for, coming suddenly in view of the lake, we saw distinctly rising from it the whole gigantic figure of the rocky barrier, jagged and notched like a huge saw, as its name Resigone signifies.

Marvellous is the effect of these mountains, which are wilder and more spectral than anything I ever beheld, and give an idea of desolation and savageness, such as belongs to no other part of the interesting lake, which here takes the name of the town at its extremity, and is called the Lago di Lecco.

We crossed the rushing Adda over a fine bridge, and drove into the town of Lecco just as the shades of evening began to fall, and the gathering clouds announced that the rendezvous of the nightly storm had been fixed upon amongst the jagged mountains of San Martino.

In descending the precipitous hill which leads to the bridge one of our horses had fallen and was considerably hurt. Though alarmed at the moment of its fall, we were not aware of the injury the poor animal had sustained: it was therefore with infinite surprise, that as our vehicle stood in the large square opposite the hotel of Lecco, while negociations were being made for our accommodation for the night, we found ourselves surrounded by a crowd of inquisitive natives, who began to gaze and speculate and vociferate in a manner quite unaccountable

to us. By degrees, the crowd increased, till the whole space seemed filled by staring townsmen, and presently dark faces peeped unceremoniously into our windows, while the immoveable postillion sat fixed on his horse, resolved to keep his contemptuous silence, which he opposed to the numerous inquiries addressed to him respecting the accident which had caused such injury to his beasts.

We began to feel uneasy, and expected every moment to see the door burst open, that these inquisitive or commiserative folks of Lecco might be satisfied that no victims were contained inside, when a signal from the hotel yard announced that the lord of the castle permitted us to enter, and take up our abode under his roof.

Why there had been any demur on the occasion remained a mystery, for we were immediately ushered into chambers of such dimensions that those even of Magadino sunk into insignificance before them. That which was allotted me was of wondrous size, divided into compartments by two large recesses, each containing two beds, so that I had no less than four at my command, and found some hesitation in choosing amongst them. It would appear as if whole armies were provided for in these localities, or as if travellers came not in single file, but in battalions, since every room is provided with so many accommodations.

A refreshing odour pervaded this fine apartment,

which was fitted up with splendid furniture entirely new, and I soon found that the perfume came from the beautiful Spanish matting with which the floors were covered. Nothing can be more delicious to the smell or charming to the eye than this floor-cloth: the pattern is exquisite, of various colours and graceful forms, plaited with the nicest art, like the mosaic of a marble bath.*

The weather was, at this time, extremely sultry, but, in most of these fine hotels, there is every preparation for cold weather: good fireplaces and a plentiful supply of fuel in baskets. Of course, the sudden changes of temperature amongst the snowy mountains render this precaution requisite.

We had scarcely seated ourselves and begun to feel at home for the night when the lightning which I had been watching from my huge windows for some time, as it played amongst the dark forked peaks of the rugged rocks exactly opposite, began to flash more and more vividly, and a long loud call echoed from mountain to mountain, summoning the demons of the storm to their nightly occupation.

From that time for some hours into the night, till I was literally weary with watching its savage gambols, the tempest raged with extraordinary fury, and presented the most magnificent spectacle it is possible to imagine.

Jutting out from the wing of the large building

* This hotel is new since Murray's report of all the inns being bad at Lecco.

in which my room was situated, extended a terrace garden, whose walls were crowned with white marble draperied statues, standing amidst vases of aloe, orange, and flowering shrubs. This projection cast a broad shadow into the lake which bathed it: while the waves, as large and foamy as those of the sea, dashed furiously against the resisting walls, throwing their spray far up into the sky. The dark mass of rocks on the opposite shore of the lake were brought out in bright relief by the sheeted blue lightning, which played ceaselessly over them, and flashed over the black clouds behind. The thunder's growling voice never paused a moment, and its prolonging echoes made the whole space resound. In spite of the lights in my large room the vivid flashes gleamed fearfully through in every part, and every now and then the casements, which I frequently and vainly attempted to keep closed, burst open with a roar of wind and the pelting rain came dancing into the chamber. The lake was all this time now one sheet of light, now a broad mass of black shadow—sometimes reflecting the rugged rocks as in a mirror, and at others dark and terrible down to the caverns in its unseen depths.

This stormy night at Lecco at an end, produced a wet morning, which cleared by degrees, and we continued our way towards Bergamo by a delightful country for some distance, replaced by less interesting scenery. Evidences of extensive commerce met us on the road in the heavily laden carts, whose

precious cargo of silk was carefully defended by awnings of thick matting, neatly arranged over the large round baskets which contained the merchandise, and fastened with iron hoops. The horses which draw this freight seem aware of its importance, and pace along proudly, shaking their ornamented fringes.

We did not stop at Bergamo, the birth place of Harlequin, except to change horses: the upper town stands well on its commanding height, and the country is pleasing in the neighbourhood. As we approached Palazzuolo, I was struck with the imposing ruins which extend far along a hill at the entrance of the insignificant little town, remains doubtless of some strong castle which once guarded its approach.

We were attracted by its lofty Campanile, which must command an extensive view of the country round; there are several objects of interest in the neighbourhood for the traveller who has time to linger here, which we had not. While the horses were changing, we entered the gateway of the inn to look at a group of women, busily engaged in the yard in winding cocoons, and in the delicate operation of snatching them out of boiling water. We were invited in by a party of women, whose appearance was so extraordinary, that it seemed necessary to rub one's eyes, in order not to suspect that witchcraft was at work, and that the three odd figures we saw were not one and the same, only multiplied larger and larger.

Three women stood in the gateway with their hands in their pockets, all strikingly alike, but each rather fatter and broader than her neighbour; the smallest could not be above thirty, had a pretty cheerful countenance, and little teeth like pearls, but her figure, like those of the rest, had no resemblance to anything but a barrel of oil, or a skin full of butter. They wore no stays, and seemed exactly of the same dimensions from waist to ancle. Nothing about them had a semblance of humanity but their heads, and shining black hair, which all possessed in some beauty. Their drapery was exceedingly slovenly and scanty, and their fat heels were not covered by any stocking; they ran slipshod about, with much nimbleness, to shew us their silk-worms, and appeared singularly pleased at the interest we took in the occupation of their damsels, for their own business seemed confined to gazing out at their door, and gasping like overcome walrusses in a storm for breath, for the heat being excessive, they probably suffered more from it than other people.

They seemed to act with one accord, and all talked and laughed together, proclaiming their delight when they found we were English, as they professed a particular fondness for that generous nation. I was so astonished at these fat graces, that I continued to contemplate them in unconcealed admiration, much to their amusement and pleasure, and most assuredly the burst of merriment which

succeeded our departure, was shared by the strangers who had just made their acquaintance.

Brescia "l'armata" has still her strong walls to remind the traveller that she was once a place of great importance, and her fortifications able to resist the attacks of her numerous enemies. I took a solitary walk on the desolate, deserted ramparts, now overgrown with long rank grass; except groups of children playing on the steep steps which lead from the street where the large hospital is placed, there was no one to disturb the gloomy silence of the walls which rise to a great height above the ditch without and the roofs of the houses within, and entirely enclose the town. Hills circle round the wide plain, spread far below, which looked wild and dreary, as I saw it in the grey evening. The citadel rises proudly above the other buildings, and commands the country.

The Roman antiquities alone of Brescia might well detain an antiquarian traveller in this quiet place. I hurried to the temple where most of the wonders, discovered from time to time, during a series of years, are preserved. Here is a crowd of fine columns, broken capitals, bronzes, friezes, and altars, all of great interest, and deserving more careful study than a passer by can give. But one treasure absorbs all attention, and almost prevents any other from being noticed. This is the exquisite bronze figure of Victory or Fame, for which Brescia is renowned, and which is the glory of the museum.

The beautiful fairy is placed in the centre of a large apartment: she stands on, or rather seems to be springing from a helmet (a restoration) on the pedestal: her limbs are full of life and grace, her feet perfection, her elevated arms all softness and elegance, the turn of her head enchanting, and her countenance beaming with expression. The drapery is finely and delicately executed, and the wings which could be taken off and on, are feathery and waving.

These wings were found separate, lying at the feet of the statue, which appeared to have been buried to secure it from injury, during some period of commotion.

Fortunately it was not found for many centuries, and consequently escaped the tender mercies of the destroying armies under the Chevalier sans Peur, which devastated the city in the sixteenth century.

This lovely genius holds a stylus in her hand, as if about to engrave some famous name on enduring brass: she is all lightness and spirit, and I can imagine nothing in art to excel the perfection of her proportions and expression.

Piled round the chamber which she adorns, are numerous carved stones and pillars, and six gilded bronze heads, very curious and characteristic: the gold is as bright as if just applied, but there is little to admire in the workmanship of most of them.

There is a beautiful hand and arm of large size, and the beauty of its execution is equal to that of the Fame.

The temple in which the charming goddess, worthy indeed to be worshipped by the lovers of art, is placed, must doubtless have been magnificent, to judge by the splendid remains of bronze and gilding which seem to have formed a part of it, and Brescia must once have taken her rank amongst the great and beautiful cities of Italy, being adorned with such works of genius as the fragments now collected display even in their mutilated state.

The classic poets have sung its praises and told how fair the city once was; Catullus knew it well, for his beautiful lake and the ruins of his lovely villa are in the neighbourhood, and Virgil was acquainted with the charms of the flowing Mela which still bathes its feet.

Not Roman antiquities alone enrich the museum, but relics of the Lombard period are to be seen in profusion, all interesting to historians and very curious.

Pliny names Brescia (Brixia), as one of those provinces of Italy, which still, in his time, retained much of the frugal simplicity and purity of ancient manners, and having been requested by a friend to point out an eligible match for his niece, he names a gentleman from Brixia.

It would occupy some time to visit all the churches at Brescia and to examine them minutely: those we had time to see did not impress me with particular admiration. Neither of the two Duomos are attractive, though there are many interesting recollections attached to them: Queen Theodolinda's

baptistry, once a remarkable feature, was destroyed and replaced by the Duomo Nuovo, which has a fine dome and is handsome, but presents no antiquities nor pictures of any particular value. In the piazza where these two Cathedrals stand is a gigantic tower with forked battlements, all that is left of the ancient Broletto, but the unfinished slovenly aspect of the square distresses the eye.

There are a few good specimens in Brescia of the paintings of Moretto, who was born at a village in the neighbourhood. In the Brera palace at Milan I had admired his fine spirited figures with their *real* draperies, placed in a clear light sky and standing out in bright relief, but in the general darkness of the churches, I found it extremely difficult to discover his beauties. Several painters of celebrity were born in this part of Italy, of whose works the numerous churches of Brescia preserve memorials, but at Venice I had a better opportunity of seeing them, for there some of the finest are still to be found.

The morning was bright and fresh on which we left Brescia, of which I regretted that time did not allow of my seeing more, on our way to Verona, and on the borders of the lovely lake of Garda we paused an hour, at the pretty inn there. The sun was so brilliant that we scarcely dared open the fastly closed blinds of a long range of windows which give a splendid prospect of the lake and mountains.

If any thing can be said to approach in beauty the enchanting shores of Lake Como it is Desenzano,



Madeley lithe 3 Wellington St Strand

NAGO AL LAGO DI GARDA.

London, John Olivier, 59 Pall Mall

from whence, as at Bellaggio, the glories of the lake are spread out in endless variety.

The Lago di Garda has a different character from that of Como: the shores struck me as wilder, and the mountains more piled over each other: the vivid tint of the deep blue waters is similar, and there are the same splendid effects of light and shade producing the same rich colours.

I cannot agree with those who think that the Lago di Garda and its mountains possess a style of colour differing from the other Italian lakes; it appears to me that light and shade are the causes of these peculiar appearances, and I think it depends upon the period at which they are seen whether they resemble each other in this instance or not. In Switzerland I observed the same, and cannot name any particular lake which in tints of blue or green is always superior to its neighbour and rival. The unapproachable purple of the Rhone at Geneva is the only exception I have met with.

The hotel at Desenzano is good and comfortable, whether Murray's strictures in his admirable guide book have been repeated to all the inn-keepers on the road and a reform has followed, I know not; but we frequently found those which he condemns worthy of praise, and in the instance of Desenzano, it was certainly the case. Many persons remain for several months in apartments at this lovely place, where there is constant amusement on the lake, and numerous spots of interest to be visited, as many

perhaps, as from my favourite retreat of Como, even though the wilder charms I found here did not delight me equally in my much shorter visit.

Along these charming shores we continued our wanderings and nothing but beauty met our eyes: richly purple rose the magnificent mountains, and the blue waves rippled gently to the land, shining in a brilliant sun which made all nature gay.

Rising from the circling waters and crowned by a diadem of ruins, appears the far-famed classic Sermione, where Roman walls and towers of the Scaligeri divide the heights. Against the cloudless azure sky these singular shaped relics of several ages come forth in amazing grandeur, they are very extensive, and from their forms have a mysterious and startling effect.

Before we arrived at Peschiera I had observed that the sides of the shore were deeply fringed with reeds; and when I heard the name of the river which here issues from the lake I was agreeably reminded of the correctness of the great poet who celebrates the

> " honour'd flood,
> Smooth sliding Mincius crown'd with vocal reeds;"

and acknowledged to myself with delight that the scenes dwelt upon by an inspired minstrel are always described the best.

Milton, when he names a spot in his glorious poems, always condescends to be correct, whether he place his glowing descriptions in Asia or in Europe;

his wondrous truth is only equalled by his wondrous learning, and those but by his wondrous memory, which treasured all it had once known, never to fade or be forgotten. He meant not alone to designate the vocal reed of the poet, whose abode crowned the watery waste, but he points out the scenery itself, where that poet sung on Mincio's banks.*

I had afterwards occasion to make the same remarks, as I followed the footsteps of the mighty master of our own day from Venice, which he made his own, through Switzerland, whose mountains and lakes he has immortalized as much as nature herself, and from whom his memory is inseparable. No doubt, if ever my fortunate star leads me further on his track, I shall find him as minutely correct in all his powerful imagery, as on the spots which his verse made me at once recognise.

* Virgil and Claudian both name the Mincio as *slow* and full of *reeds*.

CHAPTER XV.

VERONA.

2nd Outlaw. Whither travel you?
Valentine. To Verona..
1st Outlaw. Whence came you?
Valentine. From Milan.

Two Gentlemen of Verona.

VERONA—DREAMS OF ROMANCE—LOCALITIES—BALCONIES—CAPELLETTI—VEILS—PIAZZAS—PIAZZA DEL ERBI—SCALIGERI—CAN GRANDE—CANOSSI—BIRD-FISH OF MONTE BOLCAN—THE ADIGE—ROMAN ARCHES—AMPHITHEATRE.

When Dante in the very prime of his life was forced to quit his studies, and lay aside that

"Golden lyre which all the Muses claim,"

and wander, an exile, from his native Florence, he bestowed some of his immortality on the cities through which he passed, in Tuscany and Lombardy, and it is pleasant to trace his devious way as he visited various places in the North of Italy, celebrated for their universities. From Bologna to Padua, from Padua to Venice, the poet passed backwards and forwards, observing the country and its peaceful arts, and sighing to reflect on the cruel contentions which tore its cities to pieces, and destroyed the promises which genius and industry gave of happiness and prosperity.

What an age that was of Dante! how many stirring spirits were abroad, both for good and evil! Then Cimabue and his illustrious pupil Giotto, whose hand traced the features of the great poet, clad in his strange and monk-like cowl, began that wondrous art, which in their hands, although but in its infancy, is still grand, then Oderisa da Gubbio, with microscopic touch, produced miniatures which a succeeding age has not equalled: then Casella gave expression to the instrument, to whose sound the mighty master might sing of love and mystery. Then the schools of Florence fostered learning, and Guido Cavalcanti, and Guido Guinizelli put forth their claims of rivalship with their youthful friend, whose fame afterwards eclipsed them.

Alas! that Guelphs and Ghibelines, Bianchi and and Neri should extinguish or obscure so much genius, and keep the world in darkness, when such bright lights were struggling to illuminate it! Alas! that the immortal poet should have been forced to take part with factions instead of devoting his whole mind to his real calling, and have allowed bitter feelings to blot the glories of his genius.

Like Petrarch, Dante, a hater of oppression, was condemned to choose his asylum in courts, and those the courts of tyrants, of the Visconti of Milan and of the Della Scala at Verona. It was at Verona, where the Can Grande reigned in state, that, after many wanderings, Dante returned and thrilled his auditors

with his surpassing learning displayed in a discourse on Earth and Water, as if to shew that he had power over the elements. The fame he acquired on this occasion revived his drooping mind, and he exclaimed, "that it had power to reanimate him even in the bitterness of exile."*

I entered Verona in the middle of the day when the sun was shining brightly on its forked battlements, and the rapid foaming river, which we crossed, was sparkling in the brilliant rays, and rushing gayly along with its ceaseless song, past the stately palaces which bound its tide.

One of the great wishes of my life, from the time when I first delighted in the immortal romance of the lovers of Verona, had been to behold the scene where that most affecting of all tragedies, and endearing of all stories to the young and inexperienced, took place—or might have taken place. It matters little whether the legend is true, nor does it signify whether the house shewn as the palace of the Capulets, or the sarcophagus as the tomb of their daughter, are veritable or not. There is not an association about Verona which is not full of exciting interest, and Venice itself is not more precious in its memorials than this delightful city, a museum of endless curiosities, an emporium of exhaustless treasures. While I was yet a child, I had associated myself with Verona, and a friend who was indulgent to my youthful romance, had visited the city almost

* Mariotti's Italy.

for my sake, and sent me drawings and records of all that so much pleased my fancy. There is a long vacuum between that time and the present, many visions of enthusiasm have meanwhile passed away, and it was with a feeling of

> " . . . . . shame in crowds,
> And solitary pride,"

that I confessed to myself the fact that my long anticipated delight on really finding I was at Verona, had lost none of its intensity.

> " Are these the ancient turrets of Verona!"

When English strangers first began to inquire, and to search after the memorials of those far-famed and cherished lovers, the Mejnûn and Leila of the West, they were easily led to believe all that Italian ingenuity suggested, and no bounds were put to their credulity. An antique stone coffin, belonging to some hero of the Longobardi race, was, without question, received as Juliet's tomb, and was chipped and cut into minute objects as relics to be carried away by the devotees. The first old houses that were fixed upon served for the several abodes of the ill-fated pair, and imagination supplied every want without hesitation.

I knew an enthusiast who spent some time in the ruined shed where Juliet's tomb reposes, and who laid himself at full length within the sarcophagus, reciting some of the 'words that burn,' with which she enchanted her unfortunate lover. The guides

stood by in amazement then, but since they have become hardened to such scenes; after the usually cold indifferent islanders came to be looked upon as *pazzi per amore*, they were considered as legitimate objects of imposition, and scarcely a question could be asked by the sentimental, for which a ready and satisfactory answer was not found. I have no doubt that the very 'dove-house yard,' the 'friar's cell,' the palace of the 'flower of Verona's summer,' even the cottages honoured by the residence of 'Peter's' mother, and the relatives of 'Gregory' could be shewn, as well as the cobler's, to whose stall the 'pumps unpinked at the heel,' were sent, and the shop where the daggers for new 'sheathing' were despatched on the eve of the grand banquet, when the fatal meeting took place of those

"Too early seen unknown, and known too late;"

when those sweet words were whispered by Guilietta,

"Benedetta la vostra venute quì presso me, messer Romeo."

But it is now far different in Verona; there has been too much scorn poured forth by the unsentimental, too much ridicule by the 'severely wise,' and English travellers, at the present day, hardly venture to think of Romeo and Juliet, or Shakespeare at all.

A sulky German woman shewed me the sarcophagus, called Juliet's tomb, which still stands in a dirty shed at the bottom of a slovenly but luxuriant garden, evidently once belonging to a convent, *no*

doubt that of Friar Lawrence. The coffin was half full of water; the edges of red marble were much mutilated, having been chipped to make relics; there is a circular depression in the stone to receive the head of the corpse, and it is of very large size, and clumsily constructed. It is certainly, although earlier than the date assigned as the period when the lovers lived, not Roman, as has been asserted, and that is all that can probably be known about it.

A shabby old house, now a common inn, is shewn as the palace of the Capulets; the antique vaulted passage, under which I passed to the yard behind, is curious, and there is much in the building which proves it to belong to the thirteenth century: a row of pretty ancient pointed windows, may have faced the garden, and to one of them Juliet's balcony might have been attached; though this is one of the few houses in Verona which has no balcony. I never saw so many in any place before, and a few are extremely ancient, some of carved wood, and some of ponderous ornamented stone. The narrow streets, adorned with these projections to every story, with coloured awnings above them, have a picturesque appearance, even more striking than at Milan, where every thing is more refined and modern than in this old town.

I felt quite content, as I looked up at one of these windows of the Capelletti palace to believe that it was from thence Guilietta leaned, "nel tempo di Bartolommeo della Scala," when, as da Porta relates,

"avvenne una notte, come amor volle, la luna più del solito rilucendo, che mentre Romeo era per salire sopra il detto balcone, *la giovane* (o che ciò a casa fosse, o che l'altre sere udito l'avesse) ad aprire quella finestra ne venne, e fattasi fuori il vide: il quale, credendo che non elle, ma qualche altro, il balcone aprisse, nell'ombra di alcun muro fuggir voleva; onde ella conosciutolo, e per nome chiamatolo; gli disse: che fate quì a quest'ora così solo?"

I left the street, satisfied with my belief, and not without repeating the words of the simple chronicler of the, perhaps, o'er true tale:

"Tal misero fine 'ebbe l'amore di Romeo e Guilietta."

The women of Verona wear white veils instead of black, and carry their fans with the same graceful air as at Milan. In the market-place I observed many whose head-dress was a straw hat, and not a few, in Welsh fashion, with black beaver hats, men's shape, particularly inelegant and unsightly. I afterwards got accustomed to this unbecoming costume, which is common in the Tyrol, but can never be reconciled to its effect.

There is a great deal of building going on at Verona, and heaps of old houses are being cleared away daily. One wonders when these improvements were begun, for one always seems to arrive when they are in the very act of being perpetrated, and everywhere parts of every city I saw were in a state of confusion indescribable, disclosing bare walls

and old gables of *frightful* antiquity. The most inveterate lover of auld-world wonders cannot regret the removal of such close dens as are swept away by these renovating acts, since modern people are still to live in the ancient cities, and it was amongst these haunts that were kept concealed the germs of plague and fever.

The fine old piazzas of Verona, however, need not be destroyed: the arcades may remain, and whole streets of curious houses: though every year part of its antiquity must disappear, it can never wear altogether a modern aspect, while the fine old irregular bridge, which divides it in two, still raises its forked parapets, its rugged old towers and venerable walls, jagged and looped, too strong to be beaten down, yet remain: and, above all, while the pride of its treasures, the magnificent Roman amphitheatre, stands conspicuously forth to tell how great and glorious it once was amongst the cities of Italy.

Verona is full of dirty people—slovenly, shabby, ugly people:—its lower orders do not seem to know what neatness means; they are wild and coarse in their manners, not uncivil but savage, with none of the native grace and gentleness which had so pleased me hitherto, and sometimes made rags and dirt forgotten. I saw no such lovely faces as at Lomellino or near Como, either male or female, and I looked in vain amongst the townswomen and men for the beauty of Juliet or of the 'loving Proteus.' Nevertheless, at a distance, the girls with their large green

fans and in their white muslin veils and dark dresses looked picturesque, and some of the commoner sort, wearing white muslin shawls elaborately embroidered and their heads covered with square handkerchiefs, were pleasing to the eye. If this white drapery were always fresh and clean, it would be very pretty, but as that is not the case, one cannot but regret that black is not more general.

We went several times into the Piazza del Erbi, with a hope of being able to sketch some of the groups and buildings with which this curious spot is crowded, but were so persecuted by inquisitive neighbours of all kinds, most of them extremely filthy, that we were soon constrained to give up the attempt.

This Piazza del Erbi is one of the most characteristic spots I ever beheld: it has relics of half a dozen ages in its arena, and the eye is as confused as the mind in gazing upon it.

A fine tall Roman column, with its beautiful capital festooned with grass and wild flowers, stands alone at the entrance of the Piazza, which, from its length, appears narrower than it really is. At the end near the column stands a palace decorated profusely with pillars, carved work, balconies and statues of marble. Shops of all sorts are round, chiefly jewellers and bakers, oddly mixed: the former are not very splendid, and the latter are filled with singular-shaped loaves, long, short, and round and flat, of every possible variety, the bread

being remarkably white and good here. Two fountains occupy the centre of the market place, or Mercato Vecchio, one Gothic and one in the form of a Roman temple. The whole space is occupied by stalls, at which the vendors sit under large fixed umbrellas, with their luxuriant stores of fruit and vegetables, and baskets of all kinds of graceful forms scattered here and there; pyramids of loaves piled on tables, and pyramids of glasses for iced water crowned with a bouquet of lilies are placed in different quarters. A fine carved and painted hall of justice raises its beautiful façade above these groups: rich arcades and delicate porticoes are jammed in with low mean houses and shops, and countless balconies and bright-coloured awnings come out richly against the dim dingy buildings they adorn.

A high Campanile crowns the whole, peering over the confused scene, like an inquisitive spirit, ghastly long and thin, and belonging to an age gone by.

Close to this is the Piazza dei Signori, and the Scaligeri palace, and beyond is an archway leading to the strange group of pinnacles and temples close to the street, called the tombs of the Scaligeri.

I could scarcely comprehend the meaning of what I beheld, when, emerging from the archway of *il volto barbaro*, beneath whose gloomy shade the Capitano del Popolo, Mastino, was assassinated in 1277, I came at once to the iron gates of the burial-ground of Santa Maria l'Antica. Though the

original spot where the great Scaligeri were entombed, this enclosure, hemmed in by houses and in a narrow street, now undergoing repairs, has much more the air of a destination to which it was in later times reduced, namely, that of forming the last resting place to condemned criminals.

Here, in fretted temples, rich in carving, all lace work and flowered pinnacles, slender columns, niches, arches, pedestals, statues, lanterns, crosses, circles, arabesques and wreaths, lie the illustrious chiefs of a family whose first hero saved Verona from the dragon fangs of the horrible Ezzolino. Here lies the illustrious unknown Mastino, who made a lineage for himself; here the amiable Alberto and his son Bartolomeo, that "kind duke" whose word

> "setting aside the law,
> Had turned that black word death to banishment,"

when

> "Romeo's hand shed Tybalt's blood:"

and here are the bones of Can Grande, that great lion amongst dogs,* who gave an asylum in his splendid court to the immortal Dante.

Here rises the temple tomb of the murderer, Can Signore, prouder than the rest, with an equestrian figure surmounting the highest pinnacle, and seeming to challenge the other mounted knights who keep him company to accuse, if they dare, the recumbent

* Surely the real meaning of the singular name *Cane* has nothing to do with *Dog*: why should it not be an eastern title, derived from *Khan*?— a much more pleasing though perhaps erroneous idea.

chief who lies beneath, and who is surrounded by all the virtues and charities. Can Signore erected this magnificent tomb in his own lifetime, resolving that no efforts should be spared to convince posterity that he possessed all the good qualities which the assassination of two brothers might seem to contradict.

The strange old jagged turrets of the palace peer over the surrounding buildings, as if anxious to hear the stranger's opinion of the worthies with whom they were contemporary.

Altogether this collection of tombs is the most extraordinary and interesting imaginable, and is a history in itself of that famous race of Scaligeri who climbed by the ladder of popularity to sovereign power.

One of the many fine palaces at Verona was all I had an opportunity of visiting; the Palazzo Canossi, famous as the place where Napoleon resided during his stay at Verona. The apartments occupied by the great conqueror are still shewn with considerable pride, for there is by no means a feeling of enmity towards him in Italy, as far as I could observe. The floors of this palace are beautifully inlaid with different coloured woods, instead of the fine stucco and marble usually employed. The device of the family of *Canossi, a dog holding a bone*, appears in numerous compartments, and is repeated on walls and ceilings; it is to be wished it were a more poetical one as it meets and wounds the eye so frequently.

The suites of rooms are beautiful, and though somewhat faded, the furniture is still very splendid and arranged with much taste: there is a valuable museum of natural history ranged round the walls of several apartments, amongst which the most remarkable portion is a collection of fossil remains, chiefly of fishes from the neighbouring Monte Bolcan. One specimen amongst many, was so extraordinary that I stood before it in amazement, thinking, that after all, Sir John Mandeville, and it may be, even Fernan Mendez Pinto, were not "liars of such magnitude" as they have the credit of being. Embedded in a nest of rock I beheld the exact and uninjured form of an animal resembling a fish in its body, with fins something like a flounder, but having a head precisely similar to a bird with a cock's crest and curved beak. Its brisk animated character contradicted the fact of its having been for countless ages jammed between two rocks: one almost expected it to crow, so lively is the expression of its onward movement, arrested doubtless in an instant by the closing of the stones which caught it as it was swimming gayly towards some object of interest. The answering piece of rock lies beside this curiosity, in which its strange form is repeated.

To geologists, accustomed to such marvels, this bird-fish may be a common object, but it impressed me with infinite wonder and amusement.

There are many pictures fading and mouldering on the walls, but they are in general black and dingy,

and I was not attracted by any. The most interesting part of the palace is the fine square at the back, entered by a cortile with open arches, which is terminated by a long marble balustrade overhanging the rushing waters of the magnificent Adige, which bathe the feet of this and a line of other handsome palaces on its banks. So impetuous is the full broad torrent that it is a startling sight to gaze below on its wild waves, dashing and foaming and hurrying along with incredible rapidity and continued murmur beneath the various bridges whose high arches are sometimes found inadequate to contain the mad fury of its tide, when swollen by the melted snow from the mountains. The fine old Ponte del Castello, crowned with a long range of forked turrets, has however withstood its anger for several centuries, and probably may yet survive the more modern structures which span it. Beside it rises proudly the huge deep red mass of the Castello Vecchio, built in 1355 by Can Grande: it is a most venerable and imposing structure, and seems by its might and grandeur to belong to the eternal river over which it nods.

The colour of the water of the Adige was on the bright sunny day when I gazed upon it from the parapet of the Palazzo Canossi, of a rich clear green, and every one of its waves was crested with pearly foam as they danced and whirled along over the rugged rocks that must cover the secret depths with caverns bristling with pinnacles and spires. To live in a house on the extreme verge of such a powerful torrent seems bold

in the extreme, and yet beautiful balconies filled with flowers are hanging gracefully over its raging course, as if smiling at the commotion: it comes roaring and tearing through the town, dividing it in half, and all along its rocky borders stand these magnificent dwellings as far as the eye can reach. In Venice it is the ocean itself which flows through "the broad, the narrow streets"—but its bed is a soft ooze, where no rocks disturb the general tranquillity, so that the same idea of peril does not attach to the idea of the palaces growing out of the waters of that "city of the sea."

There are several Roman archways in the streets of Verona, through which we drove many times in our exploring expeditions, and I always experienced a feeling of awe as I passed beneath these venerable remains. One of them reminded me of that double one at Autun which I had sought for with so much interest, but this is much larger and appeared more elaborate or less decayed than that fine Roman relic, in one of the most antique and curious towns of France. This arch at Verona is called the Porta dei Borsari and is extremely imposing: another less perfect is called the Porta de' Leoni, whose elegant ranges of columns tell of its former grace and beauty. The French destroyed a third ancient gateway, because it impeded the progress of their baggage waggons: a few of its fragments remain.

On our way to the crowning glory of all the treasures of charming Verona, the immortal amphi-

theatre, I was amused at observing the manner in which the inhabitants carried on their occupations in the crowded narrow streets as regardless of the shock of carts and carriages as of the wild uproar created by their rushing and dangerous river. At several doors I observed ranges of high stools, perched on one of which a tailor with legs crossed would be busily engaged in his trade; his cloth and implements placed on a stool equally exalted, close behind him: women were stuck up in the same manner above the street, chattering laughing and working and reaching over to a twin seat for what they wanted. This custom may perhaps have arisen from the darkness of the houses and the wet dirty state of the streets in former days, but now all are as well paved as in the other Italian towns.

The amphitheatre stands on one side of the Piazza di Brà, which is a large space surrounded by a crowd of buildings, some being destroyed and some rebuilt, so that there is "admired confusion" in its general aspect. Nothing can be more solemn and splendid than the appearance of the large circles of gigantic arches presented by a huge mass of Roman architecture which meets the eye on entering the square.

I had never been at Nismes or Arles, consequently was not prepared to make comparisons, nor had I ever seen any relic of Roman antiquity approaching the magnitude of this glorious pile, so strangely

perfect and so beautiful in itself. At first the solidity and newness of the wide ranges of stone seats is deceiving to the eye, and you fear that recent repairs may have injured the purity of the antique, but this circumstance adds to the interest when you find that from the beginning of the twelfth century, after an earthquake which had injured it, an edict was passed enjoining the Veronese to continue its restoration stone by stone, as might be required: consequently this mighty arena, capable of containing between twenty and thirty thousand people, has never fallen to entire ruin: nor has it, as at Nismes and other places, been used for purposes of defence at any time, but has fulfilled its original destination, being employed for tournaments, games and combats for many succeeding ages.

There is something singularly pleasing to find oneself seated on one of these benches, gazing round on the extended space of the amphitheatre, which seems interminably wide and spreading, and beholding every range as smooth and perfect as at the period when a Roman audience were expected. It is not used now for any exhibition, and is therefore seen to greater advantage than formerly, when theatrical performances were here carried on: and the arches are no longer occupied by petty traders, who, till lately, had fixed their dwellings amongst these venerable ruins.

By daylight, sunset, and by the light of a mag-

nificent moon, I saw this beautiful building, each time with renewed admiration and delight, and I cannot but think a journey to Verona is worth undertaking if only for the sake of beholding her stately amphitheatre.

CHAPTER XVI.

CHURCHES AT VERONA—ORLANDO AND OLIVER—SAN ZENO AND THE FIEND—MATILIANA—CRYPT—KING PEPIN—THE INTRUSION REPROVED—MOONLIGHT AT VERONA—NAMES—ROAD TO VICENZA—VICENZA—PALLADIO—PALAZZO DELLA RAGIONE—TEATRO OLIMPICO—TRISSINO—COSTUME.

ALL round the piazza di Brà, at Verona, rise fine edifices, the work of some great master of the masonic art, stately and graceful, and commanding the most admiring attention, but I was particularly struck with a long range of enormously high fortified walls, built of alternate stone and brick, in the high 'Roman fashion,' and here and there exhibiting the forked battlements, loved by the Scaligeri: these walls extend to a great distance and are very strong and of most venerable aspect.

Verona was always strong in her fortifications, and very recent additions have been made to her former power. A new citadel of great importance has been erected, which has a grand and commanding appearance, on a height above the town: the Austrian government seem fully aware of the advantageous position of Verona la Degna, and are neglecting nothing to render it as powerful and threatening as in the days of Ezzolino and Can Grande.

The churches of Verona are very curious, and, if not altogether beautiful, possess many features of remarkable interest not to be found elsewhere. The Duomo has much of the remains of Roman architecture, and in the chief porch of entrance the grotesque carving is extremely curious; two sentinel figures represent two heroes, of no less importance than those chiefs of Romance,

"Orlando brave, and Oliver,"

instead of the saints who might be expected to guard the sacred dome. There stands Orlando, as he stood when his unwilling eyes read the lines traced by Medoro on the grotto, proclaiming his happiness in the love of the wayward Angelica.

Rimase al fin con gli occhi e con la mente,
Fisso nel sasso, al sasso indifferente.

He holds his famous sword Durindana in his hand, that blade which, in his madness, he afterwards abandoned with the rest of his armour, collected by the unfortunate Zerbino to be restored to him when his senses returned. Oliver stands opposite him, armed and grim, and indeed neither of these worthies are particularly pleasing to look upon.

The portal of this church is covered with curious carvings, which it requires much time to make out, the figures they represent are a strange mixture of the religious and romantic: Ariosto's heroes and the saints. The characteristic features of the Duomo

are vastness and space, and it is said to be a good specimen of Italian-Gothic.

In the baptistery is a remarkable font of great size, of Verona marble, and there are some very ancient tombs. Two enormous griffons of red marble, supporting columns, usher you into the interior of the edifice.

The church of San Zeno, the patron saint of Verona, interested me more than the Duomo, as it has less evidence of modern restoration and is purer in its remains of antiquity. According to the invariable fashion in the churches of Lombardy, two large figures of lions, or rather nondescript animals, crouch at the entrance, supporting the open porch: one of these creatures is holding a horned human head, very like one I afterwards saw on a font at Torcello near Venice, and the other is crushing a writhing horned serpent: these support red marble pillars with elaborate capitals, surmounted by figures of saints, projecting from the front of the porch.

The huge doors are of bronze, and more curious than any I ever saw; they are divided into compartments, representing celebrated events in the life of Saint Zeno, who was a mighty wrestler with the Father of Evil. A pretty animated boy of about fourteen, who undertook to shew us the wonders of the church amused me by his explanations of the grotesque carvings; there was certainly more enjoyment of the ridiculous, than veneration for the subject in his mode of detailing the saint's adventures.

"Look," he exclaimed, laughing, "here is the diavolo in a fine strait—the saint has the best of it. He has kicked him into the Adige—see—see—how he struggles in the waves; he was always trying to injure the people of Verona, and San Zeno had enough to do to prevent him; here is a miracle—oh! do look at this—it is the best fun of all. Do you see the cart drawn by bullocks?—well the demon has jumped from behind a rock, and has, by his horrid grimaces, frightened the beasts, they have run headlong into the river, dragging the man and cart after them; but here comes the saint—he has got hold of their heads, and is leading them safe to the other side, as if the waves were of stone, and there is the father of evil with his hoofs in the air—oh! he always gets the worst of it when San Zeno hears how he has been going on!"

We asked our young friend if he often looked at these bronze pictured histories, and he assured us that they afforded him his greatest amusement. "I am," he said, "never tired of them, and am so glad to see how the old demon gets his faring."

On asking him if the miracles of St. Zeno, thus represented, were true, he looked a little surprised, and said he knew nothing about that, but thought them very funny; then, recollecting himself, he added demurely, "Oh, yes, they are true, for they are all painted in the church as well."

The painting on the walls, however, we found to be very vivid and interesting mosaics, apparently

scenes of romance. A damsel's adventures seem there detailed, who stands by while two knights encounter for her sake: her name is written above her head 'Matiliana.' Whether there is any mystical meaning contained in this I know not, but it has a strange effect in such a place.

On another part of the walls, King Theodoric, the Dietrich von Bern, of the Helden-Buch, figures in a Roman costume; he is hunting, and surrounded by his dogs, who are seizing a stag, and our young cicerone pointed out to us his favourite figure of the spiteful demon who is waiting to take possession of the soul of the "ruthless king."

The circular window which adorns the front of this church, is one of the earliest known, and though less beautiful than many of its kind, is curious from that circumstance; the numerous slender pilasters which adorn the façade of the church, and the long ranges of circular arched windows at the sides are beautiful and peculiar, and give lightness to what might otherwise be a heavy building.

The statue of San Zeno in his chair is curious, and the enormous porphyry vase called the Coppa di San Zenone, said to have been brought from Syria by the fiend whom the bishop held as his slave, is very fine. There are many antique tombs and sculptures scattered amongst the solemn aisles, and in the magnificent crypt, which is singularly perfect and imposing with its forty exquisite pillars all uninjured.

A cemetery is close beside the church, where there are some very curious remains: amongst long grass and ruins we reached a spot where a flight of stone steps invited to descend into a cold vault containing an ancient sarcophagus, said to be the tomb of Pepin, king of Italy. The tomb is filled with water of remarkable coldness, produced by the dripping of the rain through the stone roof: our guide assured us it had miraculous properties, a belief which is generally entertained.

The wooden roof of the interior of San Zeno is very fine, and one of similar beauty is seen in the church of San Fermo Maggiore, a beautiful building full of much the same kind of interest, containing the altar and monument of the family of Aligeri, or Alighieri, illustrious through their descendant Dante the Divine. The Torriani have here also a once magnificent tomb.

As there are forty churches, all possessing some interest, in Verona, it was hopeless to undertake to visit them, and I was obliged to content myself with the few I had seen. The palaces are also too numerous to be readily visited; we were lodged in one, for the Albergo delle due Torre is the ancient Palazza dell' Aquila, belonging in old days to the Scaligeri.

The apartments are extremely grand, and the door-ways finely carved marble in patterns, wreathed and billeted. I was busy examining that which led to the suite we occupied, which opened from an open balcony, surrounding a large

inner court, when my curiosity attracted the notice of a neighbour, whose door, being equally ornamented, I was regarding, unconscious that he was near.

Suddenly the figure of a rotund little man in a flowered dressing gown and slippers, appeared advancing from the interior; he accosted me in very bad French, and begged to inform me that he was the occupant of those apartments which he intimated no stranger had a right to approach. I apologized for having ventured to gaze at his carved portal, explaining that its beauty had attracted me, but he appeared quite unsatisfied, as he rejoined, "Oh, this house is full of such—" and went away no doubt in alarm, lest his retirement should be invaded by an inquisitive foreigner, on whom he closed his door unceremoniously. As he did not speak the sweet language of Italy, and his accent was by no means pure Gallic, I concluded my tenacious neighbour was an Austrian.

The hotel of the due Torre is, besides being interesting in an historical point of view, an excellent inn, where everything is most comfortably served, and where, as is universal in the North of Italy, great civility is met with. A beautiful bouquet of flowers was placed upon our breakfast table, which one might fancy gathered in the gardens of the Capelletti, and extreme attention was shewn to our slightest desire.

The moonlight was most brilliant during my stay

in this interesting town, but unfortunately my room looked only into a narrow street, and I could see no waving "fruit tree tops tipped with its silver light," which only shone on roofs and balconies.

By the light of day I was entertained reading the names of my opposite neighbours which were sounding and looked grand as they shone in large letters on a bright blue ground, informing the world that the respective shops were kept by Bartolomeo Divino, Guiseppe Paradiso, and Antonio Tasso.

The immediate environs of Verona are by no means attractive, and we were much disappointed in an evening drive to find no object of interest, and the country barren and ugly: trees are planted on the public walks, without the gates, but apparently will not grow, for they are strangely meagre and stunted, and offer neither beauty nor shade. The neighbourhood, at a little distance, however, affords many spots of interest, and amongst them is Gargagnano, where Dante is said to have composed his Purgatorio. Pindemonti is the poet of Verona and one of those the most reflective and pathetic, his verses are considered as extremely like Gray's, and indeed there is something quite English in his feeling: the following lines remind one of the thought in the celebrated elegy:

Forse per questi ameni colli un giorno
Volgerà qualque amico spirto il passo,
E chiedendo di me, del mio soggiorno
Sol gli fia mostro senza nome un sasso

Sotto quell' elce, a cui sovente or torno
Per dar ristoro al fianco errante e lasso,
Or pensoso ed immobile qual pietra,
Ed or voci Febée vibrando all' etra.

Pindemonti has breathed the praises of his native town, delightful Verona, both in prose and verse: and thus apostrophises the Adige, whose beauties he describes as enjoying the more when wandering on its banks amongst scenes which were new to him: he enters fully into the pleasures of exploring in this charming passage:

"E tu, o bellissimo Adige, credi tu che le onde tue chiare, benchè profonde profonde maestose, benchè veloci, ed amabili, benchè prepotenti, credi che mi piacerebber tanto se le sinuose tue rive, celandomi per qualche tempo quegli oggetti, cui vado incontro, non eccitasser la mia curiosità ed io non sentissi prima del piacere d' una nuova scena il piacer forse maggiore dell' aspettarla?"

The drive is delightful from Verona to Vicenza, particularly from Montebello, between avenues of flourishing young acacias, and other light foliage, with corn-fields on each side, yellow and ripening, amidst which large trees throw their broad shade and support, from one to the other, double and triple festoons of the richest vines. The morning of our departure from Verona was beautiful, and the golden beams of the early sun darted brilliantly through the dewy green leaves, shining and quivering all round, huge melons lay basking in their fields, Indian corn rustled in the refreshing breeze, and the limes and acacias made the air all perfume.

We met carts full of gay laughing peasants, driving merrily along: it was the fête of St. Louis de Gonzaga and a holiday, which all seemed prepared to enjoy.

A great many carriages passed of a form quite new to me, except in pictures of Italian scenery near Naples: the body of the carriage is so small, it seems hardly large enough for the single occupant: behind him stands in a most uneasy and apparently dangerous position a second cavalier: the enormous wheels almost conceal the whole apparatus, and the horse is placed at an incredible distance from the fragile car.

The bullocks in the waggons are decorated with a finely adorned screen-shaped ornament, and the horses in the laden carts pace proudly along, their bodies decorated with nets and fringe, and their heads with elegant spires, tasselled and wrought with sculptured knobs and roses.

The shrill voices of innumerable grasshoppers in the fields and the warbling of birds in the hedges made the air vocal as we passed onwards, and our cheerful drive was terminated at the lively and new-looking town of Vicenza, where we arrived about the middle of the day. By this time the sun's power was sensibly increased, and as it shone down on the palaces of Vicenza the heat was excessive: nevertheless we braved it *à la mode Anglaise*, unwilling to lose the sight of a few of the attractions of this pretty town which we only made a temporary resting place on our road to Padua.

The heavy stone arcades were hung with large olds of various coloured draperies next the street, and awnings shaded every house which was not placed beneath arches; but the exclusion of the sun caused the air to be shut out also, and the damp heat beneath the dark avenues newly sprinkled profusely with water was scarcely to be endured. The flooring of boards, wet and slippery, and the unpleasing odours from the houses did not invite us to linger beneath the shade, and we hurried along as fast as our *laquais de place* would permit: but, unfortunately, he was a solemn and sedate character, to whom haste and bustle were distasteful, and nothing could induce him to pay any attention to our impatient gestures: he kept the even tenor of his way in spite of us, and continued to dole forth his information in accents of the most provoking slowness, and so distinctly that he seemed willing to afford us an opportunity of taking a lesson in pure Italian on our tedious way.

He informed us that about fifty noble families lived in the town and kept up considerable state: we passed their beautiful palaces with fine enclosed gardens, over the parapet walls of which we saw the broad leaves of magnificent shrubs mixed with cherry trees, full of fruit, lemons and oranges: all looking rich and flourishing. Ranges of fine houses built after the designs of Palladio are everywhere seen, and splendid squares adorned with magnificent buildings are in the same refined taste.

The eye is so much accustomed, in all new edifices of any consequence, both in London and Paris, and every town, in fact, on the continent, to the forms of Palladian architecture, that one might pass through the streets of Vicenza without noticing the buildings particularly, except to give them general admiration, until it is recollected that most of these are designed by the great master himself, who was "native here and to the manner born."

Palladio's own house is shewn and numerous palaces built by him, all splendid of their kind. He and Vicenzio Scamozzi, also a native, divide the city between them.

The most striking part is the Piazza dei Signori, where stand two fine columns, such as the Venetians loved to erect in all cities under their sway; and here is a high slender campanile, the upper part of which I had been remarking from the inn window, as it peered over the intervening roofs of numerous houses, boldly crowning the opposite domicile of Giuseppe Spigolon (Sarto) whose industry I had an opportunity of observing as he drank his 'aqua fresca' at his door, and sang merrily at his work.

The Palazzo della Ragione interested me extremely: the exterior is in the Palladian fashion, and has consequently, though very beautiful, no air of antiquity, but the original building is Gothic of very ancient date, and the interior is extremely curious. This was the first of its kind I had seen and it impressed me accordingly. Nothing can be more ugly

and strange than the enormous leaden roof which surmounts the fine loggie, the arches, the statues, the pillars and the majestic flights of steps all raised by the genius of Palladio and his finest work, but the hall within is of amazing size and just proportions, and is extremely imposing; at present it appears unused except by functionaries who start forward as you enter to demand a fee from foreigners, although the place is open to all comers.

Our guide led us to the celebrated Teatro Olimpico for whose singular beauties I was by no means prepared, nor should I probably have become acquainted with them had I been aware of the puritanical horror entertained by one of my companions for a theatre of any kind. We had entered the fatal precincts before she became conscious that she was really in a spot dedicated to the perpetration of dramatic performances, and unable to controul my curious examination of what to me appeared interesting, she had no resource but to sit mute on one of the elevated benches in a state of uneasy forced patience, till I had looked my last at the beautiful proportions of this graceful building which gives so complete an idea of the Grecian theatre.

The fixed scene representing streets of carved wood in perspective, although censured by severe critics, appeared to me good: there are twelve rows of seats rising above each other, as at the amphitheatre at Verona, which was just fresh in my memory, and every part struck me as gracefully classical.

The effect when the house is filled and some drama of the ancient poets is represented must be singularly striking. One could readily imagine the delight with which an Italian audience would have listened, at the time of the first erection of this building, to the tender scenes of Trissino's Sofonisba, then still popular, although a century had fled since its author enjoyed such distinguished fame, not only in his native city of Vicenza but throughout Italy.

Trissino is the pride of Vicenza, as its poet, as Palladio and Scamozzi are its architects.

His epic poem of '*Italia liberata*' failed to excite the applause which such an undertaking was expected to elicit, but his 'Sofonisba' has obtained him the fame he sought. He was born in the golden age of Italy's poets, when more than thirty, all masters of their art, claimed attention and admiration, and amongst them, his name held a distinguished place: born in 1478 he lived till the age of seventy-two, honoured and esteemed by all the admirers of genius in that age of talent.

He was nobly born and was greatly in favour with Leo the Xth, who sent him ambassador to the Emperor Maximilian: under Clement VII. he was charged with embassies to Charles V., and to the Republic of Venice. His country-house at Criccoli near Vicenza, erected under his own auspices and those of Palladio, still attest his refined taste, and his palace in the town is equally splendid.

The 'Sofonisba' is valuable as being the first re-

gular tragedy since the revival of letters, and one of the last founded on the true principles of the Grecian drama: and though little pleasing to modern taste is not without pathos and interest.

The death of Sofonisba and her interview with her sister to whom she leaves her son is very affecting.

Trissino also wrote a comedy after the ancient model, called *I Simillimi* on the favourite subject of the Twins.

The people of Vicenza struck me as far from good looking, though the embroidered white veils of the young women, or their bare heads and fine hair have a good effect at a distance; to the older females, however, the fashion of not wearing caps is very unbecoming—grey, thin and dirty hair, straggling over the sunburnt cheeks, is by no means agreeable, nor are the black beaver hats, worn by some, more graceful, though set off by large heavy copper-coloured ear-rings. The men look thin and gaunt, and many of the women fat and unwieldy, and almost all are slovenly and dirty amongst the lower classes; the streets are not so well paved nor so clean as at Verona, and though, beneath the dim arcades, there was a profusion of fruit and flowers, such as I had rarely seen, taken in general, the town had by no means an attractive aspect.

The tyrant Ezzolino, a name at which all hearers trembled, and whose frightful reign was the scourge of this part of Italy, is said to have met his death

at Vicenza. Tradition relates that two determined knights, resolved to brave all danger, in order to deliver their country from a brutal chief, whose ravages were worse than serpent or dragon could inflict, attacked him in his very den, and, having destroyed him, threw his body out of his palace windows to the delighted but terrified populace. An annual pageant used to commemorate this event, and is, I believe, even now continued, although the truth of the story is by no means ascertained.

CHAPTER XVII.

PADUA.

"For the great desire I had
To see fair Padua, nursery of arts,
I am arrived from fruitful Lombardy,
The pleasant garden of great Italy."
Taming of the Shrew.

PADUA—THE STREETS OF PADUA—THE CHURCH—NIGHT AT PADUA—CLOCKS AND BELLS—PAPER MILLS—SAN ANTONIO DI PADUA—THE PROMENADE SERVICE—HISTORY OF THE SAINT—THE FISHES—SAN GUISTINA—THE PROTO DEL VALLE—PALAZZO DELLE RAGIONE—TROJAN HORSE—STONE OF SHAME—CELLINI—CAFÉ PEDROCCHI.

THE flat road to Padua would be uninteresting but for the evidence of riches and comfort it exhibits: handsome villas in luxuriant gardens are seen on each side of the road the whole distance from Vicenza, and an almost uninterrupted line of festooned vines hangs from bough to bough, as if for the triumphal entry of a conqueror; the beauty of this natural drapery is very great, and prevents any country from appearing monotonous.

We reached Padua late in the evening of a fine bright day, and I think, strange as many old

French towns have appeared to me in the course of my wanderings, I was scarcely ever so much struck as by the first appearance of this learned, necromantic city, where the Wizard Michael Scott was said to have

"Learnt the art that none may name."

Dark, gloomy, stony, narrow, and rugged appeared the long streets through which our three wild horses were urged at full speed by our apparently as wild postillion who, far too tranquil on the road, had suddenly increased his animation as the towers of Padua rose to view. In all the dignity of a splendidly embroidered jacket, large cockade, and shining horn slung across his shoulders, did he impetuously advance through all impediments as if the spirit of Petrucio inspired him, and he was hasten- to some "mad wedding."

The heavy uninterrupted stone arcades project so far and leave so little space, that we seemed jammed in between them: at every dingy portal stood ragged, squalid, dirty groups gazing out at our speed: in the narrowest places we met enormous waggons laden with merchandise, drawn by six or eight horses covered with fringes and ornaments, and immediately after, handsome carriages, well appointed, full of gay ladies evidently going to take their evening promenade: nothing could be so out of character as the latter, with the rough, dingy, rugged aspect of every surrounding object. For nearly half an hour did we continue our wild way, by the side of apparently

interminable arcades, and considering the interruptions we met with, it appeared a miracle worthy of St. Anthony himself, that could bring us to some safe harbour. Judging from the general appearance of the town, we trembled that whenever a sudden termination was put to our career, it would be to deposite us at some close dirty inn, where we could not choose but be content with any accommodation offered.

On went our steeds, dashing, plunging and snorting, still smacked the haughty postillion's whip, and still no hostelry appeared: at length we rounded an ominous corner, and a large space was before us, occupying a considerable portion of which stood a building, so extraordinary, so amazing, that I gazed upon it in breathless wonder, while nearly opposite to its giant pile we stopped at the hotel of the Aquila d'Oro.

The apartments we secured during our stay here, faced the object of my admiration, and I had ample time to gaze my fill at the multiplied cupolas of the gigantic church of San Antonio of Padua, one of the most remarkable edifices I had ever beheld: a huge mass of pumpkin-shaped domes crowded together and relieved by high slender minarets, and turrets and parapets all covered with mouldings and carvings in red brick, wondrous and bewildering to behold.

When I looked out at the giant-like fabric, our opposite neighbour, I was prepared for something on a large scale at the hotel where we were received, but

scarcely for the stupendous dimensions of the suite assigned to our use. The saloon was a gallery paved with stucco, not less than thirty feet long, and twelve wide: the walls were hung with antique pictures taken from churches, some with gold back grounds representing dark and frowning saints, antique glass and china, models and medals crowded the tables placed against these walls: numerous dark heavy doors opened into the apartment and a wide corridor terminated it at one end, while the other was filled by a monstrous window and balcony affording a full view of the church of San Antonio, the deep hollow startling sound of whose solemn bell was distinctly heard from thence every quarter of an hour without fail: a fact which promised but little repose for the night, considering that it is usual with all the clocks in this part of the world to repeat their noisy information of the hour twice over.

Having retired to my own gigantic chamber, which commanded the same view, I was well content for some time to observe the effect of a bright moonlight on the domes and pinnacles of the church, but the further night advanced the less evidence of desiring repose was exhibited by the turbulent inhabitants of this caverned desert of a town. If Shakespeare had ever been to Padua I should not have wondered at his placing the scene of Petrucio's riotous reform here, but as he probably had not, his doing so must be looked upon as another of the many proofs of his astonishing intuitive knowledge of things.

Never was night so frighted from her propriety and made hideous as in the square of St. Anthony, where every description of noise appeared to me to be congregated to disturb peace. I had shut and carefully fastened my windows in despair, although the night was oppressively hot, in order that I might not be distracted altogether by the musical performances of the citizens of the learned city, but it was in vain, no stone walls could keep out the din, and I sat, certainly not patiently, waiting until for very weariness the cracked fiddles should give over playing polkas, the improvised choruses, all independent of each other, should cease, and the individual shrieking should sink into silence. One man had placed himself at a corner of the square, and seemed emulating the howling of a disturbed dog who detested the moonlight; another responded at the other corner in a roar which had not even words as accompaniment and excuse, and shrieking boys and females seemed resolved so try which could wake the echoes furthest.

Where, I thought, as hopeless of rest I sat in my huge chamber twenty feet long and nearly as broad, —where is the melody of Italy I have heard so vaunted!— we are approaching Venice, where though "Tasso's echoes are no more," music must still cling to the walls of her palaces, and float upon her waters —yet no discord that the mind of man could imagine equals the charivari without!

"I have no recollection of the time,"

when all this hubbub ended, or how I continued to sleep that night and several others at Padua, in spite of the great bell of San Antonio.

Padua is said to be the fatherland of striking clocks as it is of paper mills, and probably possesses a charter for being noisy, with which a stranger has no right to find fault: afterwards, in the towns of the Tyrol, I found the nocturnal noise of Padua equalled and the musical powers of the natives of the same kind.

It was in Padua that the first paper mills introduced into Europe, were established. At the end of the thirteenth century Alfonzo the Tenth, King of Castile brought them into Spain, from whence the invention passed to Italy, and took effect at Trevisa and Padua. This important discovery, so fraught with consequences to learning, came from the East, where the Arabian Yussuf Amrou, who had observed it in China, brought it to Mecca his native city, in the 88th year of the Hejra A.D. 706. From Arabia it spread to Spain, and flourished chiefly in Valencia, where the town of Sativa, now San Filippo, was renowned in the 12th century for its beautiful manufactories of paper. The Spaniards used flax, which was abundant with them, instead of cotton which was much scarcer and dearer.

Early on the following day after our arrival at Padua I hastened to the piazza opposite, in order to become more nearly acquainted with San Antonio and its seven domes, and all its eastern minarets

and Gothic arches. An equestrian statue keeps guard in the front of the church, and seems placed to remind the beholder of the times when all the cities of Italy were kept by the strong hand. This spirited statue in bronze represents Erasmo di Narni, surnamed Gatto Melato, a famous captain of his time.

The interior of the church is very striking, not altogether from its architectural beauties, although they are worthy of admiration, but from the profusion of riches and ornaments in the chapels and shrines: gold silver and marble, are illumined by hundreds of candles, and the chapel of *il Santo* is one blaze of splendour, golden lamps, silver candelabra and sculptured and variegated marble, enough to dazzle the eye. That of Santa Felice is equally solemn and grand, with yellow marble pillars, and the altar covered with *scales* of the same materials of every hue.

The art of Donatello shines forth in the bronzes, and the marble groups with infinite lustre, and the frescoes and pictures everywhere gleaming on the lofty walls have an effect extremely rich. There is a fine and very powerful organ, and, as we remained during the service, we had an opportunity of judging of its power which appeared to me superior to its sweetness, as might also be said of the voices of the choristers, which made the vaults of the church re-echo to their sound. I never saw anything so singular as the manner of conducting

the service in San Antonio. Not for a single moment did any one in the church, except ourselves, appear to be quiet: the effect was more like a promenade concert than a religious ceremony.

Several priests continued, without pause, to walk briskly round and round the aisles and choir, bearing some precious casket, covered with embroidered silk, and preceded by a boy in white robes, carrying a book, which did not, however, seem to be used: each of these priests walked alone, and was succeeded, at an interval, by the next, and each had a train behind him of fishermen and peasants, male and female, dirty, ragged, and unseemly in aspect. No one appeared to be uttering prayers, either priest or people, and all hurried along at a rapid pace. Women in slovenly gowns and coarse shoes, or a sort of sabots without heels, with dirty white stockings, their heads covered with a flabby yellow white veil, promenaded with the utmost indifference, some holding the arms of their husbands or friends, some their children by the hand, the little girls occasionally looking pretty in their white veils. A few decently dressed citizens and their wives in embroidered clean veils, and silk dresses, tripped along, and occasionally a lady and gentleman dressed with great assumption of Viennese fashion swept past: none kept their seats long, and all bowed and crossed themselves as they passed the shrine of San Antonio, but I could not perceive that they were oc-

cupied in prayer. Some dirty Franciscans in coarse brown dresses, lounged after the rest, and several large dogs roamed about amongst the dense crowd, much to my surprise; but I understand these animals are of a race privileged to remain in the sanctuary. All the time of this parading the organ played vehemently, and the singers exerted themselves to the utmost, and when the priest addressed the congregation from the pulpit, there was no cessation in the promenade nor in the perambulating of the priests.

I could not understand the meaning of all this, for though I had heard that at Padua, the priests are accustomed to address the people in different parts of the church, I was not prepared for this continuous roaming of every person within the walls. St. Anthony is said by tradition to have compelled the Evil One to follow him for ever, in the form of a pig, but whether this movement has any reference to the legend I have not ascertained.

The following is a brief history of the saint: St. Anthony was a Portuguese by birth, and born in 1195; his original name was Ferdinand, but he adopted that of Saint Anthony who is called the Great, and was considered the patriarch of the monks near Coimbra.

He attached himself to St. Francois d'Assise, and went to Italy to be near him. Saint Francis sent him to Vercelli to study theology, and he soon

distinguished himself by his zeal, becoming celebrated at Bologna, Toulouse, Montpelier, Limoges and Padua.

As a missionary preacher he was greatly followed, his eloquence being remarkable, his person attractive, his voice peculiarly melodious, and his manner captivating; "his words," says the historian of his life, "were so many darts that pierced the hearts of his hearers." He was called by Pope Gregory III. who heard him preach at Rome, the Ark of the Convent, or Rich Spiritual Treasure, and as a proof of the effect of his exhortations, it is related of him that he visited the terrible Ezzolino himself at Verona, and boldly entered his presence, careless of all the dangers to which he exposed himself.

He found Verona a scene of alarm and desolation; the tyrant had scattered fear and horror around, and when he desired to be introduced to the palace every one fled in alarm at the rash request. He however persisted in approaching him as he sat on a throne surrounded by a troop of armed wretches, ready at his slightest sign to execute his sanguinary commands.

St. Anthony, nothing dismayed, walked up to the frowning chief and bade him listen to his words —bade him repent of his crimes, while there was yet time before the vengeance of offended Heaven should overtake him.

Ezzolino struck with astonishment remained motionless, while the saint set forth in glaring colours,

the wickedness and cruelty of his actions, and when he had ended, all present expected that the fatal signal would be given for the bold preacher to be cut to pieces before their eyes. Instead of which the tyrant, pale and trembling, descended from his throne and unfastening the girdle from his waist put it round his neck as a halter, cast himself at the feet of the saint, and with cries and tears besought his intercession with God for pardon.

St. Anthony raised him up and bade him hope, enjoining him certain penance and mortifications, which, for a time, the penitent attended to, pausing in his mad career of crime. He sent a costly present to the saint, who rejected it, telling him that most acceptable to God would be his restoring to the poor what he had unjustly taken from them.

As long as the saint lived Ezzolino's conduct was less monstrous, but, at his death, all his old passion for slaughter revived, and he gave way to it with unrestrained licence.

The mode of his death is variously related; by some he is said to have been assassinated, but others recount that being taken prisoner by the confederate princes of Lombardy, he died distracted in a prison in 1259.

From his cell in Padua, meantime, St. Anthony instructed the world, although he had much to suffer from persecution, and the ill-conduct of Elias, the successor of St. Francis, a luxurious monk, whose excesses he opposed.

A little before his death St. Anthony had retired to a place without the town of Padua, called Campietro, and feeling his end approaching, he desired to return to his convent. He was therefore taken back towards the town, but was too ill to proceed further than the suburbs, where the director of the nuns of Arcela received him. There he died, on the 13th June, 1231, aged only thirty-six.

At the first news of his death there was a panic in the city of Padua, and all the inhabitants greeted each other with the sad words—The Saint is dead!

Then began the miracles at his tomb, and the rest had better be——silence.

His *tongue* was kept as a sacred relic in the church built in his honour, that being the only part of his body remaining entire, when, two years after his death, the domes and minarets of the holy building rose, and all that was mortal of him was laid in the magnificent tomb, over which St. Bonaventure wept and prayed, exclaiming, as he kissed the relic,

"Oh blessed tongue, that didst always praise God, and hast been the cause that an infinite number learned to praise him: now it appears how precious thou art held by him who framed thee, since thou art employed in so excellent and high a function."

The famous picture of the saint preaching to the fishes is extremely ill-painted, and so excessively absurd that it seems impossible that rational beings could ever look on it with any other feeling than contempt. We observed, however, several fisher-

men contemplating with much awe, the groups of attentive fishes all with their heads out of the water and their mouths open, eagerly swallowing the doctrines of the saint.

The church of San Guistina presents rather a grand façade, and the lions at the entrance are similar to those at the churches of Verona, and common to most places of worship in this part of Italy. The principal part of the building is comparatively modern, and not very interesting, the marble altars are, however, extremely fine, and the flooring has a beautiful and singular effect, being composed of red, white and black marble, arranged so as to appear in long cubes, the deception of which, as you walk along, is very curious. The great space and the loftiness of the roofs make it very impressive.

San Guistina stands at the end of a large square, the Prato del Valle, as an enclosed space in the centre is called; it is quite unique in its kind, and struck me as handsome and ornamental.

The Prato has a moat round it of clear water, and pretty flying bridges lead into its groves which are crowded with statues, representing the great personages who have made Padua illustrious in the course of many ages. These figures, gleaming through the bright foliage, have a very pleasing effect, and the idea of this homage to genius is certainly well worthy of imitation: some of the statues are well executed, all have merit and the general effect is good. This is the fashionable promenade

of the Paduans on Sundays and holidays, when the Prato presents a remarkable and peculiarly animated *coup d'œil* such as no other town that I have seen affords.

The Palazzo delle Ragione is in the same style as that which had so much attracted me at Vicenza, but is infinitely finer. The enormous roof has the same clumsy effect, and the open arches, *loggie* and ornaments of the exterior are as striking, but the interior is far more so, being of larger dimensions, and more curious in its contents. The hall is two hundred and forty feet long, eighty broad, and eighty high, and is said to be the largest, unsupported by pillars, in the world.

A great magician, according to popular belief, erected the roof after designs from some eastern palace, another constructed the remainder, and a greater still, the necromancer Giotto, adorned the building with paintings which still glow on the walls with gold and azure. A mysterious light enters this magnificent hall from apertures in the ceiling, and the rays of the sun are so directed as to fall at the proper time on the painted signs of the Zodiac which are seen gleaming on the pannels.

The busts of illustrious Paduans, from Livy their early, to Belzoni their later boast, adorn this singular gallery, some within some without the building: strange carvings appear over the doorways full of historical information. Across the floor, passing

from a golden aperture in the roof, a line of meridian light throws its bright streak. A block of black granite holds a conspicuous station at one end of the chamber, which I imagined to have been one of the relics presented by Belzoni to his native town, but which I found was the 'stone of shame,' used for the exposure of debtors, a sort of Queen's Bench to clear away debts, not uncommon in this part of Italy, and seen in many of the towns.

Occupying an immense space in the hall, stands a colossal model of a very clumsy horse, about which I had some difficulty in obtaining information. At length the custode, a remarkably lazy individual, condescended to mention that this extraordinary apparition was the Trojan horse: but to all inquiry of why it was placed there, for what purpose executed, who was the artist, or what was its destination, his only answer was, "io non so niente," and I was left to my ignorance and its effect, wonder.

I was amused, as well as surprised, in the streets of Padua, not at the beauties they exhibited, but at the singular gloom and loneliness of the continued arcades. I lost my way several times, owing to the extreme similarity they possess, and it seemed to me that I was always going round and round in a circle of mazes, and gaining little ground, in spite of the distance traversed. There must certainly be something necromantic in this extraordinary old city, which seems a fitting abode for exorcisers of spirits, and all who hold communion with other

worlds, and many such are said to have had their abode in Padua.

As I hurried along the close arcades I came suddenly to an opening, and observed a strange block of sculptured stone, standing against a wall. On examining it attentively, I found it to be an ancient Roman tomb, under a canopy. This, I was informed, is held in great veneration at Padua, as the tomb of Antenor, the supposed founder of the city. It is a curious relic to stumble on at the corner of a street, but nothing in Padua is common-place, or like any other spot.

When that eccentric genius Cellini, had resolved to accept the offer of Francis I., to visit Paris and execute some of his beautiful works for him, he passed through Padua, where he was received with high honour by Pietro Bembo, who was not at that time made cardinal. The account given by the artist of his stay is singularly characteristic: —

"Signor Pietro Bembo said, 'I am resolved that Benvenuto shall stay here, with all his company, if they were a hundred in number.' Thus I stayed to enjoy the conversation of that virtuous (!) person. He had caused an apartment to be prepared for me which would have been too magnificent even for a cardinal, and insisted upon my sitting always next him at table: he then intimated to me, in the most modest terms he could think of, that it would be highly agreeable to him if I were to take his likeness: there was, luckily for me, nothing that I desired more; so, having put some pieces of the whitest alabaster into a box, I began the work, applying, the first day, two hours without ceasing. I made so fine a sketch of the head, that my illustrious friend was astonished at it; for, though he was a person of

immense literature, and had an uncommon genius for poetry, he had not the least knowledge of my profession, for which reason he thought that I had finished the figure when I had hardly begun it, inasmuch that I could not make him sensible that I required a considerable time to bring it to perfection. At last, I formed a resolution to take my own time about it, and finish it in the completest manner I could; but as he wore a short beard, according to the Venetian fashion, I found it a very difficult matter to make a head to please myself. I, however, finished it at last, and it appeared to me to be one of the most complete pieces I had ever produced."

When the accomplished artist was departing, his generous friend made him a present of three horses for his journey, having cheated him into accepting them by ordering the man with whom Benvenuto bargained to pretend that in consideration of his great merit, he offered him this accommodation: the scrupulous sculptor saw clearly to whom he owed the gift, and much friendly contention took place between him and his patron, before he could, according to his own account, be induced to take what he had not yet sufficiently earned by his services. Those were golden days for artists, such as the illustrious of our own times must almost regard as fabulous, when they compare their own treatment to that received by the geniuses of old from Kings, Popes, and Cardinals.

The café Pedrocchi, which Murray names as one of the curiosities of Padua, is a very ambitious building, partly Gothic, and partly Italian; and, rising as it does amongst the gloomy old arcades,

has a striking effect: the principal façade is very handsome, and has the appearance rather of a palace than a café. The story told of the master of the mansion's sudden riches, and his paying his workmen in old Venetian gold, implies that in the old ruinous house where he had long lived as a poor man, he must have found a treasure, if indeed he had not studied to more effect than usual, and discovered the Philosopher's stone, which is more likely to come to light in Padua than anywhere else.

No doubt a Roman palace or temple once occupied the place where this fine café now stands, for, in digging its foundation, numerous marbles were found, which have been carefully preserved and employed to decorate the present edifice.

CHAPTER XVIII.

VENICE.

"The native element of Venice, the sea, is now receding from her lagoons, like a faithless friend in the hour of adversity: and she lies down lifeless and mute, a spectre city, insensible of her rapid decay, dead almost to the fondest hopes and to the revengeful wrath universally cherished in Italian bosoms, as if the sentence that laid her low were irrevocable, and the hour of Italian redemption, however soon it may strike, would always be too late for the revival of Venice."—*Mariotti's Italy.*

"To Venice," cried I, "quick, quick, that is exactly my wish."

Andersen's Improvisatore.

RAILROAD TO VENICE—ADVANTAGES—APPROACH—THE CANALE GRANDE—MOORE THE POET—CALE—SAN MARCO—CHIESA AUREA—HARMONY OF VENICE—PIAZZA SAN MARCO—FIERA FRANCA—THE DOGE'S PALACE—VENEZIA LA BELLA—THE TEMPORALE—THE DUCAL FETE—THE IMPROVISED MASQUE.

HAVING left the principal part of our baggage at Padua, with the intention of returning there, we set forth at half past six in the morning, by the railroad omnibus to the station called the Ferdinando-Lombardo-Veneta: and there, in a shabby little building, we awaited the train which was to bear us on our way to Venice.

Along a flat marshy country, possessing no

beauty but that which is derived from an almost uninterrupted line of festooned vines of great richness, and fields of luxuriant produce, for twenty-five miles we pursued our rapid flight, and arrived at the termination of the present work, which, happily as I considered it, stopped short of Venice three miles.

It would have certainly caused me a pang to have arrived at Venice in any other way than by sea, which for centuries has been the only mode of reaching the 'Aphrodite of cities:' nevertheless, being safe myself from such a misfortune, I am contented to acknowledge that, since the Fates have decreed that the modern improvement and convenience of a railroad is to introduce the sea-born goddess to all comers for the future, it is impossible that such a design could be more worthily carried out, or that anything more magnificent, surprising or suitable to the city could have been projected than the fine range of arches which rise out of the blue waters, and span the sea for three miles in a straight line, throwing a chain of stone from one projection of land to the other. So splendid and so singular is the effect it produces, that it strikes me as appearing quite in character with the ancient reputation of Venice, when her wealth could compel the elements to obedience, and it is a comforting reflection that this beautiful aqueduct, for such it seems and indeed will answer the purpose of such, will perhaps restore the ruined commerce of the Queen of the Lagunes, and

she may once more raise her diademed head amongst the cities, lofty and commanding as of yore.

Probably by the time these reminiscences have passed through the press, this wondrous railroad will be completed, and Venice be made as easy of access as any other town of the north of Italy. A continuation is projected to Milan, and, if the consent of the King of Sardinia can be gained, Turin will be joined to that: how rapid then will be the route from Paris to Lyons, and from Turin to Venice. If human ingenuity could make the road across the eternal mountains of snow less perilous, Venice and Paris could shake hands in a day.

I could not help looking on the stupendous bridge of three miles, which was so rapidly advancing towards completion, with admiration, from the covered boat in which we were seated, as it bounded over the waves: we were the sole passengers to Venice, except a French gentleman who appeared connected with the works, and who was merely going to the city for letters. He had, he informed us, never seen its wonders, as he only visited it on business, and should remain as short a time as possible there, as he considered it a "triste sejour!"

The sun shone brightly, the breeze was fresh, and the sea sparkled and danced in the most animated manner. Far off I beheld, but indistinctly, domes and spires and white gleaming buildings, but nothing had, as yet, shaped itself to my sight.

We landed at the custom-house, where a very

severe and very elaborate examination of carpet-bags and baskets detained us for a vexatiously long period, and we were then turned adrift to our fate, being pronounced innocent of evil intention towards the sea Cybele.

We engaged another boat and rowed briskly onwards towards Venice in good earnest, her buildings rising up, like fabrics in a dream, from the blue expanse as we entered her watery streets, shot under the arches of the Rialto, and stopped suddenly at the foot of the flight of steps giving entrance to the Leone Bianco.

To me there was nothing melancholy, nothing gloomy about the appearance of the city; all was brilliant, surprising, bustling and animated; along the quays workmen and market-people were busily employed; on the shores were crowding sails and flitting boats,—those strange boats seen only in that region—the form of the palaces was so exquisite, with their ranges of pointed arches and Moorish tracery, some of them splendid and fresh looking, all touched and glowing with the rays of the mid-day sun, that I forgot all I had heard of the *tristesse*, the sadness, the gloom, the ruin of the place, and saw in it only a "glorious city in the sea."

We secured a suite of roms, all hanging over the Canal' Grande, and, for an hour, I had nothing to do but to stand gazing, in fixed and delighted admiration, on the picture of Venice spread out before me. *There* was the reality of all my day-dreams;

there, beneath my balcony, rolled and sparkled the deep blue sea, across its quivering bosom darted innumerable gondolas, "black but comely," with shining silver lute-shaped prows, and rowers with gaily-flowered jackets urging them along, as they stand rowing in a manner precisely opposite to the usual method, but in the same way as on the Italian lakes. There rose, within a few yards of me, the theme of song and romance, the noble arch of the Rialto; there, glaring in the clear water, lay reflected, and there glowed in reality, ranges of palaces once covered by the frescoes of Titian and Tintoretto, their lace-work parapets cut sharply out against the intensely blue sky, and the deep rich shadows of their long arcades brought boldly out by the searching beams of a sun, so golden and so genial, that it seemed as if no cloud could change its lustre. Numerous white sails gleamed along the shores, and many boats lay moored to the frequent and high pillars striped with the gay colours of Austria. Barks which wore not the gondola shape nor hue, but with bright-coloured awnings and painted sides shot across the canal, and under the peopled bridge, and as far as I could see, all was life and movement on the broad expanse of the Canal' Grande.

Even in Venice there were far off interests, which had power to occupy my thoughts, and until it was ascertained that expected letters were awaiting us, I was quite content to postpone an exploring expe-

dition on foot which we meditated along the numerous allies and passages which are now to be found in the watery city, connected by innumerable flying bridges over the intersecting canals.

One of the letters I received was full of the details of a friend's meeting in London at a gay party with the poet Moore, and nothing could be more appropriate to the romantic spot I was now in, than the agreeable account I read of his wit, his gaiety, his easy good-humour, and the allusions to his unrivalled verses; Venice and Moore seemed entirely in unison, as poetry and Byron were naturally the first associations on arriving, and at Venice even the charming rhymes of the minute describer Rogers rises to exalted poetry when he tells of the city to whose palaces the "salt sea-weed clings," in lines as eloquent as if the sad wanderer of the Lido had written them himself.

Having satisfied myself with home news, I hastened to set forth, and was soon in the midst of the *cale* of Venice with her water streets appearing every two or three minutes beneath the bridges of steps, which are crossed on the way to the Merceria and the Piazza di San Marco.

These *cale* or passages are filled with shops all pretty and gay, though rather small and necessarily confined: painted Indian mats, glass beads, models of gondolas, and every description of trifle, such as the Palais Royal at Paris can furnish, are crowded in the windows and in cases outside. A continued stream of pedestrians poured along, making the

whole scene as gay as possible, and nothing appeared that could for an instant impress me with the idea of Venice being *dull.*

I reached the Piazza di San Marco, and all its glories were at once before me. There stood the proudEastern fabric, destined to efface the memory of Santa Sophia of Constantinople: that gorgeous palace-church, which it took ages to erect, and which all the genius of the Eastern and Western world contributed to decorate.

The tenth and eleventh centuries raised those wondrous walls by slow degrees, created the fine proportions of the aisles and the arches of the nave, and produced those windows of delicate form. Then rose around the monument, like a richly wrought chain, the vaulted gallery of arcades: other ranges of carved work grew above the lower rows, and the work was crowned by shining cupolas, which glitter in the sun of which they seem to form a part.

San Marco is a temple, where all arts and styles and tastes and beauties seem united in one exquisite whole. Like the enamelled illuminations on the pages of an antique manuscript, all, though gorgeous and glowing, is subdued and kept down into such perfect harmony, that in the general effect, there might seem rather an absence of brilliancy than a redundancy of ornament: yet every part of St. Marco is adorned with the most elaborate care, every nook and corner, every projection and cornice, every capital and pillar, every roof and wall, and not an

outline but is jagged with fretted carving. Gold, azure, crimson, flash in the bright rays that dart down upon them from the pure blue sky, against which each lovely form is sharply traced.

Arabian, Grecian, Byzantine ideas combine with German thought, and all is mingled like a web of every colour intertwined with gold and silver: St. Marco is like a rich sunset in the Alps, where there is a blending of hues and tints, over which a golden haze is thrown, softening and subduing the glory which would be otherwise too intense.

It seems as if Venice with all her Doges had existed only for the purpose of creating this immortal fabric, that while it rose their splendours kept pace with it, and when they fell the spell-bound temple sank gradually with them. Alas! it appears as if San Marco were indeed sinking into the sea on which it stands, for the mosaic flooring is irregular like its waves, and fearful are the ravages which time and flood have wrought upon its jewelled pavement, every cube of which is as precious, in the eyes of taste, as the pearls in the ear of the fugitive Jessica.

Well may this unrivalled fane be called *La Chiesa aurea;* there is not a morsel of the roof, the walls, the floor, the exterior, or the interior, that does not present a miracle of art and beauty in painting, sculpture, goldsmith's work, marble, bronze, silver, and precious stones.

The study of a life is scarcely sufficient to trace the wonders and beauties that crowd this glorious

museum of all that is grand and gorgeous, and every moment so occupied would be well repaid.

Venice is the priestess of art, and San Marco is her temple. Venice owes her existence to the triumph of art over nature; even to the very soil she stands on she is independent of nature, which disputes with her every inch of her dominions, and it is this strife which renders her beauty complete.

Venice is the realization of a poet's dream, for never did a poet or a painter visit the lagune who did not feel his imagination could go no further; it is possible that she is indeed

> "Still dearer in her day of woe
> Than when she was a boast, a marvel and a show."

Every page of the history of this wonderful city is written in her monuments; scarcely a stone of her buildings but has a tradition attached to it, and they are not obscure though pleasing traditions, such as delight the fancy in other antique towns, but those that tell the fate of dynasties and kings, that recount stories of long lines of princes, that preach homilies on wealth and pride, that sing dirges of greatness and power and beauty and glory faded, gone—fled like the traces of the last year's snows in the valleys, yet immortal as they are on the heights of those surrounding Alps which close the picture of Venice in the extreme distance.

Like the Alhambra of Granada, to which it must surely bear much resemblance, it is not the size of the

building which impresses the mind, but it is the exquisite perfection of every part, which is *felt* as well as seen. Nothing comes forth more gaudily than the rest: all is harmony and repose; if it were not a fable that buildings have been raised by the power of music, it might be believed of Saint Mark, for there is melody and song in the architecture of her fane, and poetry and feeling in her piles of many-coloured marble.

I had seen every part of this fairy temple and again stood on the piazza before I was conscious of all that this unrivalled square possesses besides; but when I looked upon the palace of the Doges, and saw groups of sauntering Greeks in their huge *bragas* and scarlet caps wandering amongst the arcades of the palace, I could scarcely believe but that I was in some Moorish city, and these were the Zegris and Abencerrages of romance

Close to the bright blue sea stood out the two granite columns, spoils of the Crusades, which had been proudly eminent there since the twelfth century; on one glowed the winged lion, on the other St. Theodore trampling on his crocodile.

The wondrous Campanile, so pondrous, so engrossing, exalted its massive form before me, the three delicate masts which were once a type of the supremacy of Venice on the seas, held up their slender wands from the rich bronzes which support them. The Piazzetta's graceful ranges of palaces, all statues and arcades, ran onwards to the quay; while nearer were those mysterious pillars covered

with Byzantine ornament; unexplained groups of captive kings were clinging to ornamented walls, and arches, all encrusted with carving like lace-work, leading to distant vistas of marble stairs and balustrades.

Nor is all *ancient* beauty in the Piazza di San Marco: the modern palaces and the new arcades are full of grace and dignity, and the ancient charter of Venice to unite all styles with advantage seems here confirmed; the great Basilica, the Ducal palace, the Campanile, the columns, the sea, the houses, and even the gay cafés, and the glittering shops all blend into a whole, and form a picture of rare and exquisite loveliness.

It is this that reconciles one to the act of following the fashion of Venice and sitting on chairs at the foot of the campanile, with all these glorious objects of contemplation before the eyes, and taking coffee or ice while listening to a fine military band and gazing on richly dressed groups promenading and chatting in a spot which seems formed only for a procession of nobles, such as Titian would have painted, and over which Faliero might have presided: a spot where the genius of Paolo Veronese has shewn how the fair Dogaressa of the Morosini and all her train of ladies appeared, as she repaired to San Marco to receive the golden rose presented to her by the Pope.*

Not even a vestige of antique costume, such as

* The fine picture representing this ceremony is at the Duke of Devonshire's villa at Chiswick.

Canaletti preserves to us, is now to be seen on St. Mark's—no long senatorial robes, no graceful eastern veil or barracan—the people are undistinguished in their dress, and but for a sprinkling of Greek sailors there would be nothing different from other Italian or French towns. Yet who can forget that here was once kept the Fiera Franca, a great fair in honour of the fête of the Senza, or Marriage with the Sea, and here were exhibited all the costumes of the East; here glittered the famous crystal and glass which made Venice renowned through the world; in this place stood a dark African with his rich turban and embroidered robe vaunting the merits of those mysterious feathers which Venetian hands had painted so delicately and which he offered as plumes plucked from the wing of the Phœnix; eagerly bargaining for the priceless treasures, so coveted by their Emperor, the wandering knights of the court of Charlemagne might here be seen, unarmed, dealing with the artful infidel, and allowing themselves to believe the marvels he related.

Here, at a stall, might be beheld those robes, all glowing with jewels and gold, the only ones that Charlemagne condescended to array himself in, and here hung, in glittering rows, those fragile chains of gold of unmeasured length which the Venetian beauties of noble birth delighted to wrap round and round their slender throats,—a fashion now confined to the wives of the gondolieri.

At the time when Venice was the emporium of the commerce of Europe all traders, small and great, repaired to the Lagune to purchase foreign wares. An anecdote is related of a pedlar of Eisenach in Thuringia, and Louis VI. called the Holy, husband of the pious lady who is celebrated as Ste. Elizabeth of Hungary, a heroine of the beginning of the 13th century, which gives an amusing picture of the manners of the age.

The landgrave Louis was once attending the fair of Eisenach, where this pedlar, then a dealer in small wares of no price, attracted his notice, and the prince asked him how it was possible he could gain a subsistence by the sale of such trifles. The pedlar replied that he was obliged to do the best he could, and found it difficult enough to live, but he added, 'I could gain a very good livelihood, in spite of the meanness of my wares, if I had but a safe-conduct from one town to another.'

Louis, pleased with his readiness, ordered a small sum to be given him, a safe-conduct to be made out, and promised to be responsible for all losses, on condition of sharing his future profits in trade.

Who was now so happy as the pedlar?—with a good prospect before him and a prince for his partner: he carried on his little commerce briskly, and travelled far with his merchandise, returning every new year's day to exhibit his stock to the landgrave, who selected such articles as pleased him, and directed that the pedlar should be clothed in a

dress such as those worn by the attendants of his court.

Finding that his business increased, the fortunate dealer purchased an ass, and at length ventured on a longer journey than he had yet taken: he travelled as far as Venice, and there possessed himself of goods of a kind far superior to any he had yet ventured to purchase. Elate with his important acquisitions he proudly took his way to the fair of Würzburg, where his foreign curiosities created much surprise and admiration. The sight of them however excited the cupidity of certain Franconian worthies, who began to entertain a strong desire to ease the good pedlar of so great a load. As they had no intention of disbursing on the occasion and yet would not forego so excellent an opportunity of becoming possessed of the coveted treasures, they followed the usual plan of the day, and boldly seized both the goods and the ass which bore them.

The poor pedlar fled in dismay, and made the best of his way to the castle of Wartburg, where he related his injuries to the Landgrave.

Louis desired him to be of good cheer, for he would see him righted without loss of time: accordingly he summoned his nobles, knights and vassals for an expedition, and accompanied by the pedlar, proceeded to Würzburg laying waste all before him. The terrified people fled in all directions, and the bishop, at length alarmed at what was going on, despatched a messenger in all haste desiring to

know why the Landgrave acted with such violence. The Landgrave simply replied: "Tell the bishop I am seeking for my ass, which some of his people have taken away."

This answer sufficiently explained matters: before many hours were gone both ass and goods were safely restored, and the pedlar and his partner rode merrily away.

What a history is contained in the Piazza di San Marco! and what thronging memories rush into the mind every time the immense square is crossed! It is like a place where eastern story-tellers resort, every day new traditions, new marvels, may be told there, always exciting, always interesting.

How many heroes of romance have inhabited that Moorish palace, which extends from the *mosque* of Saint Mark to the sea, and along the quay del Molo or dei Esclavoni! how beautiful is its façade, as seen from the foot of the Campanile, what a maze of trefoil-carvings above the graceful colonnades, and how freshly the lace-work parapet runs along the walls of marble, chequered with delicate red and white lines!

From that magnificent balcony how many Doges have addressed an assembled multitude! from that balcony, what spectacles have delighted the people! thence was proclaimed by one of the council of Ten, the fatal words—"Behold the blood of the traitor Faliero!" as he waved aloft the sword which had revenged the Republic: to that balcony on festive

occasions was fastened a rope which descended from the summit of the Campanile, three hundred and forty feet, and there the gaping crowd below saw a figure, all tinsel and finery, ascend and descend the perilous path for their amusement, while a pyramid of tumblers fixed themselves in the most dangerous part, and stood balancing themselves, between life and death, between the blue sky and the pavement of San Marco.

Perhaps on this piazza, beneath the shadow of those colonnades Dante might have talked with the daring traveller, Marco Polo, whose adventures may compare with those of Sindbad: here he might have listened to his wondrous tale of

> "Anthropophagi, and men whose heads
> Do grow beneath their shoulders:"

and eagerly inquired news of

> "The wondrous horse of brass,
> On which the Tartar king did ride,"

when the gorgeous Venetian penetrated to the courts of the monarchs of Cathay: his poetical enthusiasm might have been excited by histories of Persian monarchs, of the wealth and splendour of the 'generous Hatim Tai,' of the

> "Jewelled cup of the King Jamshid,"

and the tear might have started to his eyes for his own loved Beatrice, as he heard of the sorrows of Leila and her

> "hapless Mejnoon, mad for love,"

and the misfortunes of the deathless artist Ferhad,

who carved the story of his passion upon the rocks of Beysitoun; for Marco Polo the Venetian must have brought home much lore as well as riches with him from his voyages to the East.

No wonder that Petrarch could not restrain his exclamations of admiration, when he first gazed upon the glory of the palaces of Venice—no wonder he endowed her with his precious library—no wonder that all the poets of Italy worshipped at her shrine, and all of a poetical spirit venerate her! No wonder that she is called Venezia la Bella, and that her name and that of beauty are synonimous!

The first day I was at Venice I could only gaze about me in a confused state of delight at everything I saw, unable to appreciate at their full value the treasures spread out before me. I was not surprised at the wonders I saw because I had expected them, but I did not imagine it possible that highly raised expectation could have been so entirely satisfied and anticipated pleasure so fully realised.

We were still lingering as we passed a few of the three hundred fairy bridges, which span the blue canals, when some heavy rain-drops warned us to hasten back to the Leone Bianco. The lively crowds which filled the passages, began to move quicker—groups of splendidly dressed Viennese ladies, as gay as if going to an evening concert, hurried forward—pretty grisettes without veils, their long thick shining hair rolled round the head in immense plaits, decorated with a single red rose, or a few

silver or bead pins, folded their glittering fans, and tripped up the steps: the female water-carriers with their beaver hats and pails slung to a yoke over their shoulders moved rapidly along, and as we heard the well-known growl, which announced the evening *temporale* we were not sorry to re-enter our hotel by the street side.

For several hours during the remainder of the day the storm was at an awful height, but splendid in the extreme in the eyes of those who feel admiration, not fear, at such sublime spectacles. As we sat at dinner, in a large saloon, the vivid flashes which illuminated our table was, it is true, somewhat startling, and we were forced to draw round us a huge screen and close the curtains of the many windows, in the hope of excluding its visits; but afterwards, as I watched the gambols of the storm-spirits from my own apartment over the canal, I confess, that I did not regret the occurrence, so beautiful did Venice look amidst her passionate tears and brilliant smiles, for the sun continued to shine in the midst of all this commotion of the elements, as if unmoved at their clamour.

It was impossible to venture out in a gondola that evening, unless we had a desire to realize a picture drawn by a friend, who related to me an adventure of her own, which occurred many years since at Venice. There was a grand fête given by the archduke, in the Palazzo di San Marco, to which all the strangers of rank, as well as all the nobles

in Venice were invited. The evening was calm and lovely at the hour when every gondola was ready to bear its freight to the palace stairs: but scarcely had half the Canal Grande been gained when a storm, such as we experienced, came suddenly on: the frail coverings of the gondolas were inadequate to keep out the deluge, and all the fair guests of the Ducal party arrived drenched with rain and sea water: as they entered the gilded and glittering apartments, every one had to shake her dripping plumes and wring the moisture from her robes, so that the whole scene presented an appearance of a masque of Naïades acted to the life.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE EVE AND FEAST OF ST. JOHN—THE WARRIORS OF THE CROSS—THE MERCHANT-SPIRIT—THE BARGAIN—DANDOLO—BYRON—THE PALACES OF VENICE—TAGLIONI AND THE CA' D'ORO—THE ARMENIANS—THE PRINTING PRESS—MECHITARISTICAN SOCIETY—MECHITAR—STRUGGLES—THE SONS OF THE VIRGIN—THE MOREA—EMIGRATION TO VENICE—THE ESTABLISHMENT.

THE night which followed our first stormy evening at Venice, was calm and clear, and I enjoyed exceedingly looking out upon the fine canal, where the dip of oars was occasionally heard in the dark waters, and I could watch many a gliding gondola pass, only distinguishable by the bright fire-fly spark of its light. A long line of palaces lay reflected deep in the waters, and, just beneath me, the waves splashed against the steps, where several boats moored to the pillars, were restlessly dancing up and down. There were no songs, no words of Tasso, from the gondolieri, but across the waters their occasional cries did not sound unmusically, mingled with the solemn tones of several church bells, "swinging slow," as their spectral voices announced the Eve of St. John.

The Feast of Saint John was once an important period for Venice, for that was the day agreed on,

when the confederated powers of Europe, at the opening of the 13th century, should assemble in the favoured city, and from thence set out on the glorious expedition, whose object was the rescue of the Sepulchre of the Lord from the hands of the Paynim.

The blind and aged Dandolo was then sovereign of Venice, and to him were sent envoys from the illustrious knights of France and Flanders—Count Baldwin, Count Thibault, and others of high renown.

"We are come," so ran their address to the Doge, "from the most powerful barons of France, who have assumed the Cross to avenge the wrongs of our Lord, and to recover Jerusalem, if God permit. Those knights are aware that you and your people are mighty to assist them, and they implore your pity for the Holy Land, begging for ships, and the means of passage thither, desiring you to join in their pious endeavours."

The aid required was granted by the magnificent Republic, and a supply at once promised of vessels for the transport of four thousand five hundred horses, and nine thousand esquires, besides others for four thousand five hundred knights, and twenty thousand *sergeants* or *servientes* on foot, and provisions for a year for all this body. Eighty-five thousands marks in money, about 170,000 pounds sterling, was demanded by the merchant princes for this service, and the Doge himself, in order to induce the knights to agree to the bargain, promised to

contribute fifty galleys for the love of God, free of expense, stipulating that all conquests made by sea and land during the holy expedition should be divided equally between the pious princes and their assisting friends. This transaction, it must be confessed, has much the air of a mercantile venture on one side and a marauding expedition on the other—but it passed for piety in those days.

On the feast of St. John, Venice was to receive these noble warriors of the cross, the Lagune was to be covered with her armaments, and the Adriatic was to be crowded with her sails: but though many brave and pious enthusiasts kept their word, and arrived on the holy eve of the Saint, others failed, being diverted from their purpose by various causes and induced to sail from other ports.

Venice was, however, nobly true to her agreement, exceeding instead of falling short in the promises she had made. Nothing had ever yet been seen in Christendom equal to the fleet she provided, and sad was it to find that there were more ships ready than crusaders to fill them.

Villehardouin the historian exclaims in indignation on the occasion: "Ha! what a curse it was that so many sought other ports and came not to join the army, for then had Christendom been exalted, and the land of the Infidels subdued!"

The grateful leaders saw with consternation that though all was prepared that they had demanded, the unexpected defection of so many of

their number, rendered it out of their power to fulfil their own engagement, and the sums for the Venetians were no where to be found. Gold, silver, jewels, vessels of precious workmanship, all that the chiefs could gain or borrow, all that they possessed, were cheerfully poured forth in payment; but where were the treasures promised by the Count of Blois, where the riches dedicated to the cause, by the dying Thibault of Champagne—why lingered the Duke of Burgundy, and the Count of Bar le Duc, and how came it that thirty-four thousand marks were yet unpaid?

The spirit of *the Merchant* was however awake, and an advantage became apparent which was not to be lost. The Republic sighed for the repossession of Zara, their revolted colony now possessed by the King of Hungary. Zara lay in the way of the Crusaders as they sailed down the Adriatic—"Restore Zara to us," said they, "and we will take that service in payment."

Great was the consultation, and long the debate on this important question: for the Pope had commanded that no contention should arise between any Christian princes, but that the holy war should reign alone. The King of Hungary himself had taken the cross, and to attack him was an infringement on the rule laid down: but there was no other way, and Venetian eloquence carried the day.

The Barons and the Pilgrims had assembled to hear a solemn mass in the church of St. Mark, after

the ratification of the new agreement, when, instead of the priest whom they expected, the aged Doge himself mounted the tribune and addressed to them these welcome words.

"Signiors, you are associated with the bravest people upon earth, for the most holy of enterprises. I am very old and feeble, and it may be that repose is more needful to me than glory: but I have yet power and ability to command and to direct, and if you will that I should assume the sign of the cross, and leave my son in my place at home, I will cheerfully accompany you on your noble expedition, and take charge of the fleet, as the Marquis of Montferrat has of the land forces."

His noble offer was accepted with one voice, and many noble Venetians, excited by the example of their Doge, proclaimed themselves ready to follow him.

Dandolo descended from the tribune, cast himself on his knees before the high altar, and bathed in tears of holy fervour, placed the cross in his ducal cap.

On Midsummer-day the weather was the most delightful imaginable: warm, sunny, clear, and fresh, and it was with infinite pleasure that I took my place in a gondola at the foot of the hotel stairs, where stood to assist us two important characters; one a black who had been in Lord Byron's service, and is now devoted to that of his countrymen, being the most intelligent, good-natured, civil and honest of his class; speaking several languages—English in

particular—well, and possessing a variety of useful accomplishments. The other personage, a tall, well-dressed and remarkably respectable-looking old man, followed us into the gondola, having been engaged as our guide during our stay in the watery city: he had also lived with Byron, and in common with all who speak of him, seemed to have a tender recollection of his generosity and benevolence.

No doubt it is well ascertained by this time that the English love and expect to hear of Byron at Venice, (or Geneva), as they do of Romeo and Juliet at Verona, and many anecdotes are doubtless invented by the acute Italians to amuse and please them, but I think there is no mistaking the genuine feeling of regard which he has inspired in all those who knew him: his name seems always to awaken recollections of some amiable action, and the traits in his character recorded are usually of that melancholy kind which endears him to the imaginative people amongst whom he lived for three years, dispensing his bounty with an unsparing hand.

Nothing can be compared to the pleasure of finding oneself seated in a gondola, on a bright glowing morning, and being impelled noiselessly along the beautiful Canal' Grande between rows of palaces ancient and modern, every one of which seems teeming with romantic and historical recollections. Mocenigo, now sacred to the memory of Byron: the palace of the Foscari, no less so, where the magnificent Francis I. was lodged when he came to

Venice, and which is placed in a most imposing position, within sight of the poet when he wrote his eloquent record of the sorrows of the original owners of the splendid but now ruined fabric, which is however shortly to be restored by Government, and will rise again from its disgrace.

The same renovation awaits the fairy palace called the Ca' d'Oro, which will shortly repair its drooping head, and

"with new spangled ore
Shine in the forehead of the morning sky."

Nevertheless both of these gems of art are even now so beautiful that one dreads even a touch should impair their nameless grace; if not submitted to such rescue they must however shortly sink into the waves that bathe their feet, and one can only trust that the graceful Taglioni, to whom the enchanted halls of the Ca' d'Oro now belong, will suffer no hand ruder than her own to wave directions over the exquisite pile which she proposes shall once more glitter above the proud waters of the grand canal, as splendid as of yore.

The Grimani, the Contarini, and a host of palaces stand on each side of the watery way, and lofty churches, glittering domes and spires peer over each other, rising majestically along the shores.

"Venezia! Venezia! chi non te vede non te pregia!"

Well might the poet Sannazaro exclaim in his enthusiasm,

"Men built Rome, but the Gods created Venice."

Our first attempted visit to the church of San Giovanni was a failure, for so great was the crowd assembled, both in the church and in the little square before it, that to enter the one or to penetrate the other appeared impossible. There was a sort of fair in front where booths were placed exhibiting numerous objects in glass, such as obtain great favour amongst the lower classes in Venice; flowers of spun glass were glittering in all directions, and ranges of bright-coloured fans invited the fair portion of the visitors to shade their faces from the scorching sun.

In the centre of the piazza was a raised platform with an orchestra as fine and as noisy as it could be made by tinsel and by drums, and the gaping crowd which was excluded from the music within, seemed to enjoy what they heard here quite as much. The church of San Giovanni was lighted up with thousands of candles which looked dim and dismal compared with the intense sunlight without, but more than this eclipsed effect we could not see, as entrance was quite impossible. We therefore descended the steps, and re-entering the gondola, resumed our row, proceeding at once across the blue expanse of water towards the Armenian convent on the little island of San Lazaro.

We were shewn all that may be seen of the establishment by a young brother whose courtesy was remarkable, and who, in this respect, strictly follows the rule of his interesting order. He was amused at a question I asked him, whether he had ever seen Lord Byron when he studied here, assuring me he

was not born at that time, for I had rather considered his venerable garb than his looks, but he pointed out two brothers who were walking in the gardens to whom the poet had been well known. His signature in the strangers' book I saw with much interest. The name in English is a curious blotted scrawl, and gives an idea that he had not altogether decided how to spell his name at that period; he has repeated it in the Armenian character at the foot of the page.

Here for several hours every day Byron was accustomed to study, and calmly and pleasantly must these hours have passed away in this quiet retreat; from the windows of the library the Lagune spreads out broad and clear, and all intercourse seems cut off with the busy world of Venice.

There is a printing establishment, and books are beautifully got up here both in French, Italian, English, and Armenian; we brought away a few as specimens, which are sold by the brothers.

The garden walks are covered with trellices of grape vine, and form charming secluded promenades where the inhabitants of the convent recreate themselves and contemplate. There reigns over all a perfect calm and repose, and the neatness of every part of the establishment is delightful, as well as the polite and graceful manners of the members of this interesting society.

Their funds seem ample, and are increased by occasional bequests from generous individuals whose

portraits adorn their apartments. They have a college established at Padua for the education of poor orphan Armenians, and although their regulations forbid the reception of foreigners into the society, they willingly allow them to study under the direction of their learned professors. They correspond with literary societies in the most remote countries, and in Rome they have lately acquired some property.

In the church, which is very simple, there are few ornaments or pictures, one is remarkable as being executed by a converted Turk; it is a well painted copy of Sassoferrato's Madonna.

They possess a valuable collection of Armenian Manuscripts, and a good library. Their books are distributed throughout Asia, and the type of the Armenian press is particularly fine and clear.

In 1810, when the other monastic establishments of Venice were suppressed, this, which is called the Mechitaristican Society, by virtue of a particular decree, remained in its former independence, and as the brothers have now some lands which they purchased of the Venetian state, and some capital in its bank, they are likely to continue flourishing in their works of benevolence and utility.

The founder of the Society was an Armenian doctor, named Mechitar, who was born at Sebaste, a city of Armenia Minor, in 1676. He distinguished himself from early youth, by his learning and piety, and at fifteen became a monk in the

convent of the Holy Cross. Here he devoted himself to reading and composition, but, afterwards travelling with a Doctor of the order, he met, in Armenia Major, with an European missionary, and gained from him much satisfaction and information relative to European concerns.

Mechitar appears to have been born a poet, for in his retreats he was continually composing hymns and sacred verses, which he recited to his pupils and friends, and the study of holy poems was his great delight.

His chief desire was to visit Europe, and he made several attempts to do so, without success, storms and sickness having driven him back, when on his way from Asia. His wish was to establish a literary academy with a view to the enlightenment of his countrymen, and many and various were the difficulties he underwent, before he could succeed in that which he felt would be so useful. In all his dangers and troubles his lyre was never mute, and the poet-priest still sang his sorrows in melodious numbers, describing his hair-breadth scapes in moving and eloquent strains.

At length, in spite of the opposition which had so long retarded his views, from ignorant enemies or timid friends, and after toilsome journeys and repeated disappointments, Mechitar fixed himself at Constantinople in the year 1700, and gained followers enough to support him in his plans of public good. Some of these he sent to preach in

the different cities of Armenia, and others remained with him under the same roof to pursue their studies.

Here he established a printing press, and issued works on spiritual subjects: and having taken a house at Pera, he got together all the implements necessary for bookbinding as well as printing: he was, however, obliged to conceal the real object of his occupation, as he had many enemies to contend with, who opposed the propagation of Christian doctrine.

So violent, at one time, was the feeling against him that it was resolved that he should be seized and sent to the galleys. But he obtained timely notice of this plot, and being protected by the French ambassador, escaped it. Finding, however, that to stem the torrent of ignorance and superstition, which prevented the spread of knowledge in the East was a vain attempt, he wrote to all those of his followers who were scattered in the different towns of Armenia preaching, and informed them that he desired their return, in order that they might emigrate in a body to some place where their society might be established on a secure footing.

Mechitar had, at this time, retired under the protection of the ambassador, to a convent of Capuchins, and there he heard some merchants speak of the fertility and good climate of the Morea, which was then subject to the governor of the Republic of Venice. He proposed to his friends that they should all re-

tire to this favoured spot, and accordingly they took steps for the purpose. They elected him their head, and chose as the badge of their society, four Armenian letters which signify "The Sons of the Virgin—preachers of Repentance."

Secretly and cautiously, and in small numbers, they departed from Constantinople, and when the patriarch himself set forth, he possessed only four hundred piastres,* with which to begin his establishment in a foreign country. But nothing could shake his resolution, and in spite of flight and pursuit, and dangers and hurricanes, he still went on his way rejoicing and invoking the ever ready Muses.

At length he reached Napoli di Romagna, and there sat himself quietly down with sixteen of his adherents: a portion of land was assigned them by the governors, who gladly received them, but the funds they possessed were so small that for three years, these learned and persevering men were obliged to subsist almost wholly on charity.

At length interest began to be awakened to the merits of the fraternity who patiently endured so much for the sake of learning and religion. Several grants of money were made them, and Mechitar began to build a church and erect an edifice for his projected monastery.

For twelve years the society slowly but surely improved in its progress in the Morea, when unfor-

* A piastre then valued two shillings.

tunately war broke out between the Venetians and the Turks: the latter ravaged the province, and Mechitar and most of his party were obliged to fly.

They took refuge in Venice in 1715, and established themselves, sadly and despondingly, in a mean house in the quarter of San Martino. Some of the body in the mean time had been taken prisoners by the Turks, who had got possession of Modon, the chief town of the Morea, and had sold them as slaves. They were, however, fortunate enough to be bought by Christians, and were thus once more restored to the parent stock.

The respect in which the Armenian fugitives were held induced the Venetian government to assist them, and finally to permit them to establish themselves on the island of St. Lazaro near the city. A hospital for lepers had formerly been built there in 1180, which was dedicated to St. Lione, but not having been for many years required, and an establishment for the poor which had replaced it having been found too distant from Venice, no objection was raised to the Armenians becoming the possessors of the island.

Mechitar and his flock, poor and wretched, with a meagre prospect before them, debts impending and difficulties threatening, took their way from Venice across the Lagune to this solitary spot, where all looked desolate and forlorn: they found a

ruined church and a deserted dwelling, containing only a few rooms, two wells and a garden.

Out of these materials the zealous and determined patriarch, regardless of all opposition, and contemning all dangers, at length succeeded in erecting a humble monastery for the dwelling of his monks; restored the old church and placed five altars in it. By degrees new chambers were added, a belfry erected, a refectory and a library; and at length the Armenian convent rose, a respectable pile, above the encircling waters, an enduring monument of successful perseverance in a good cause. Mechitar received into his establishment Armenian youth of every degree, making no distinction between poor and rich. After having tried them some time, in order to discover their talents and disposition, he clothed them in a black robe, according to the costume adopted by his society, and committed them to the school of the Noviziato, where they had fitting tutors to superintend their education, the general direction being reserved to himself. He afterwards advanced them according to their progress and capabilities. No foreigner was admitted, as the intention was purely to afford instruction to the Armenian nation which stood in need of it. Amongst the most learned and useful studies that of languages was particularly attended to,—the Armenian being of course the chief,—whence it followed that in this island it flourishes in the greatest purity.

The venerable abbot closed his amiable and useful life at the age of seventy-four, and is buried in the sanctuary of his church, in a tomb prepared by himself long before his death.

CHAPTER XX.

THE LIDO—THE BURIAL GROUND—THE SHADE OF THE POET—THE CARNATIONS—THE STARFISH—THE CICERONE—CHURCHES—GONDOLA LIFE—GOOD FORTUNE AT VENICE—CAMPANILE—VENICE SEEN FROM ITS HEIGHT—TWILIGHT—THE LIGHTS ON THE CANALAZO—PALACE OF THE DOGES—PICTURES——BARBAROSSA—POZZI—BASILICA—PALA D'ORO.

AFTER we had taken leave of our friends at the Armenian convent, we re-entered the gondola and rowed on to the Lido, where we landed on a melancholy-looking shore, at the place where Lord Byron kept his stables, and where, after his hours of study at the convent, he was accustomed to mount his horse and take exercise.

Two shabby little tenements are erected here for the convenience of the Duke of Brunswick, who comes to this spot to bathe, smoke, and breakfast. Nothing can look more utterly uncomfortable than the whole arrangement. It is in the midst of the Jews' burial ground, and a place fit only for a party whose conversation should be

"Of graves, and epitaphs, and worms."

We walked across this mournful tract, which, at a solitary hour, must be as dismal as the heath over which

"Poor Marianne,
The darling of Aix la Chapelle,"

wandered to meet her Leopold and stumbled on "the little grey man," or the spot chosen by Rudiger for his sacrifice to the Fiend,

> "It was a place all desolate,
> Nor house, nor tree was there."

The Jews' graves are scattered here and there amongst the rough grass and sand, the inscribed stones lying flat, and most of them in a very decayed state: we heard some mournful singing at a distance, and a crowd surrounding a newly made grave. At length a deep, hollow roar startled the gloomy silence, and I found myself standing on the lonely coast of the Lido, with the wide Adriatic beating hoarsely on the sands.

I walked down close to the waves, and looked over the dreary and solemn expanse, and along the flat and unbroken shore where, day after day, the greatest poet of his age, alone and full of moody musings, would ride rapidly backwards and forwards as far as the tide permitted, from this spot to a ruined church at the extremity of the Lido.

The picture was sad in the extreme, and no one could contemplate it without feeling the deepest compassion for the unfortunate genius, who, under the influence, as it were, of an evil star, wasted away his life in sullen regrets and unavailing fretfulness, creating his own miseries, and unsoothed by a single home comfort.

If ever the world of shadows were revealed to mortal eye, it is here, along the dismal coast of the

Lido, that one might expect to see, at gloomy evening, the figure of the wild horseman, his dark eyes flashing through the mist, his arms tossed impatiently towards the lowering sky, while his fiery steed, urged by his menacing voice, scours along the sands, and disappears from view in the distance towards the low lands of Malamocco.

A boy met us on the sands with bouquets of fresh carnations, which I gladly accepted as a memorial, though nothing could be less in character than these glowing flowers and the desolate shore, divested of every appearance of cultivation. I picked up a few common shells and a dry star-fish as more appropriatet o the spot, for they reminded me of a French author's simile, which I could not but apply to the poet,

"whose image would not be forgot:"

"I am deserted and desolate – abandoned on the solitary shore, like a star-fish which the retreating waves have left behind."

Our guide told us that Byron, after his melancholy ride, would frequently pass his evenings at the theatre and in parties where his society was greatly coveted —"for," said he, "he was very attractive, very amiable, and *molto bello*."

Strange that to all his dependants he uniformly appeared "amiable"!—this man described him as extremely generous, and doing continual acts of benevolence.

The tears started to the old man's eyes as he named him, and probably his sensibilities being thus roused caused him on our return to sink into a

sadness, from which he did not seem to care to be disturbed. Now and then he spoke to our attendant who had known him formerly, and I heard afterwards that he was moralizing on the vanity of life, and regretting that he had outlived so much that made existence joyous: "I am old," he said, "and no one regards me now."

I imagine that this mood was caused by words which he might have overheard from one of our party, who being by no means wedded to poesy, not only depreciated his late poet-patron, and sneered at his praises of him, but betrayed some impatience at the tedious manner in which he executed his part of *cicerone*.

I was sorry that the poor old man's feelings were hurt, and I could not help sharing in the vexation he felt: he attached himself to me during the remainder of our sight-seeing, and continued to describe almost in a whisper, as if he feared the ridicule which might attach to any exhibition of enthusiasm. I always observe that a cicerone thinks it necessary when he is detailing the merit of an object, to stand precisely in the way of your regard, therefore the preference I had attained from my sentimental friend was rather endured than enjoyed on my part; particularly as he was too sensitive for me to beg him to change his usual habit.

This custom I had reason to regret sometimes in visiting churches, where more than usual liberty of light is generally required for the pictures, which

in my opinion, are never seen to advantage over altars and overshadowed by pillars, or with cross lights from numerous windows destroying their repose. The general effect of a richly coloured picture may be extremely grand and harmonious surrounded by gilding and touched with light streaming from painted glass, but its true merits can scarcely be appreciated amidst such *disturbative* adjuncts.

Venice is full of fine churches, which it requires time to study and do justice to: many master-pieces of art are contained in them, but few are in good lights. In San Giovanni e Paolo, the carved monuments of several Doges are extremely grand: here lie Morosini, Steno, Mocenigo, Loredano, and others in tombs of Greek marble, finely sculptured. The choir is rich in bronzes and marbles, and the painted glass is good.

Titian's famous St. Peter Martyr was formerly in this church, but is removed to the Academia. Tintoretto, Vivarini and Bellino have adorned the altars, and the whole effect is grand and more than usually solemn.

After pausing at Santa Maria della Salute, and visiting Il Santissimo Redentore, both fine and imposing buildings, each containing stores and treasures of art, we rowed back to the hotel. I could not help enjoying more this existence on the water than looking at all the glorious pictures and carvings which fill the countless churches. The novelty of

this style of life possessed extraordinary charms for me, and I grudged every moment out of the gondola.

I never felt weary of gliding along between the rows of palaces on the grand canal, nor did I dislike the narrow water streets either, where you are constantly darting under bridges, and turning sharp round corners with a warning cry, and then you emerge into the broad canals, and pause before the long flights of marble steps which lead to some beautiful building.

During the time of my stay at Venice the weather was peculiarly propitious: though there was considerable heat, yet a fresh breeze was never wanting: the sea was always sparkling and in motion, the canals never still or glassy, so that I had fortunately, no opportunity of judging whether the reports of certain disagreeables in Venice are true.

"For me, I think it gold, because it shines,"

and am quite content to believe that Venice is always as lovely and delightful as I found it, without acting the part of the "Curious Impertinent" and inquiring further.

It seemed as if nature and good fortune had conspired together to exhibit Venezia la Bella in her most captivating array to my eyes without a single drawback, and the impression left on my mind is a vision of perfect beauty, surprising in its extreme novelty and enchanting in all points of view.

I met with travellers afterwards who had "buts" for Venice, but I heeded them not:

> "I know not, I ask not what fault's in thy heart;
> To me thou art lovely, whatever thou art;"

and I imagine it is the near approach that Venice makes to perfection which causes her imperfections to be more severely criticised than those of other cities.

It was evening when I mounted the easy stairs which lead, by well constructed stages, to the top of the Campanile, and by a most exquisite sunset I beheld the unequalled view which is presented from that exalted position. Venice and all her islands, her domes and spires and minarets, her sea and distant mountains lie set in golden light beneath, but what struck me as curious, neither canals nor bridges can be discerned, so close the streets seem pressed together at that gigantic height.

The domes of the unequalled Basilica glittered in the setting sun as if all the treasures within those wondrous walls, which it required eight centuries to amass, were sending up their rays into the sky from the horses of brass. The snowy statues ranged along the palaces of the Piazzetta caught the glowing light. St. Theodore and the immortal winged Lion, on their elevated stations, were ruddy with the rosy hues which rested on the Arabian arches and fretted parapets of the Doge's gorgeous dwelling-place.

Far away, the sheltering shores which guard sea-

girt Venice from the roused anger of the uncertain element, lay like gems upon its bosom. Chioggia, Palestrina, Malamocco, with their bars of sand and rock, keeping the encroaching ocean in check. The Lido extended its long tongue of land, protected by the fortress of San Andrea, while more in the centre of the Lagune, rose the island of Murano with its glass works, once the marvel of Christendom, Burano, once renowned for its manufacture of lace, San Servulo, San Clement, and the Armenian convent.

Forth from the waters rose the resplendent domes and pillars of Palladio's San Giorgio Maggiore, Il Redentore and other churches, those shrines of Veronese, Tintoretto, Titian, and their glorious brethren; and the majestic arsenal, still magnificent and powerful, seemed threatening the nations even yet.

I descended from the Campanile and returned to 'busy life again' in the Piazza San Marco, where a fine band was playing, and the whole square was peopled by a fashionable crowd. I have seldom seen ladies more elaborately dressed than here, where the modes of Vienna are more in favour than those of Paris: groups were sitting round tables drinking coffee and taking ices, in costumes fit for a ball; and beautiful children in muslin and ribbons were flitting about like cherubs, sharing the cates provided by their brilliant mammas.

As evening approached, light after light appeared

under the galleries of the long arcades: lights came out from the large windows above, and in a few minutes the whole area was illuminated; still the music sounded, still the lively groups promenaded, and all was as gay and cheerful as the boulevards at Paris.

Along the Canalazzo, as we returned, every palace was beaming with lights which were reflected in the clear dark waters. The Rialto was lighted with gas, and sent its long lines of radiance along the waves; and our Leone Bianco looked as gay as the rest, as I landed at the steps and mounted to my chamber to resume my place at the balcony, and look out half the night, according to my wont, on the canal and its wonders.

Although I have delayed naming the Palace of the Doges, it was of course the first place in Venice, after the Basilica, which I hastened to visit and admire. It requires some resolution, however, to leave the piazza and the contemplation of those two beautiful pillars of Acre, covered with graceful arabesques, close to which crouch that singular group of captive kings, if such they are, who seem clinging to them for protection. It is difficult also to cease gazing up at the unequalled beauty of the Porta della Carta, and to resolve to pass through to the Scala dei Giganti, every step of which, and every part of every step, deserve minute observation, for they are inlaid with ornaments of the richest patterns. The balustrades are finely carved, the

supports are carved, and carved baskets of fruit and flowers stand at each corner, as if just placed there by the hands of some beautiful Venetian peasant girl.

The terrible lions' mouths in the corridor are passed, as well as the grim sentinels which give name to the staircase, and the palace of the Doges is entered, with all its halls shining and glowing from the immortal hands of Titian, Veronese, Tintoretto, Palma, and Bassano, and a host of others, all presenting their best works to the dazzled eye.

There are ceilings by Veronese, which it is really worth while to dislocate one's neck by examining. There are portraits of the Doges, by Palma, which speak and tell their histories. There is a Paradise, by Tintoretto, nearly as large as Paradise might be, since happiness goes into so small a compass. There are scenes of ancient Venice, by Leandro Bassano, presenting marvellous perspective; and battles, by Tintoretto, which cover the walls with banners and with galleys Zucchero is here, recalling memories of Elizabeth and Mary Stuart, but an emperor is his hero on this spot; he who submitted to degradation in front of the great Basilica, to gratify a haughty pontiff.

Some Catholic writers deny the fact of Pope Alexander the Third's arrogance on the occasion of his reconciliation with the Emperor Frederic I. Barbarossa, when, on the 24th July, 1177, the monarch was compelled to bow before him on the

pavement. It is asserted, that the Pope set his foot upon his neck, repeating the words of Scripture, "Thou shalt walk upon the asp and the basilisk."

Saxon chroniclers relate that, at that moment of the Emperor's humiliation, Dieterich, the margrave of Meissen, brother to Conrad the Rich, who found the silver-mine of Freyberg, called out loudly, and asked his imperial master why he submitted to such degradation.

The Pope did not understand German, but the gesture that accompanied the words of the fiery Dieterich were probably intelligible enough, and he forthwith raised the Emperor from the ground, and embraced him in the usual manner.

In the public library, at Venice, is preserved the chronicle of Cardinal Bessarion, which details this incident, and it is said to have been commemorated by the monks in a painting on the sides of the altar of the church of St. Mary, at Halle, which was afterwards partly effaced by the monks, out of shame, but the original name of Alexander, covered with the words Sanctus Josua would shine out as at first represented through all the disguise put upon it.

Girolamo Gamberato's picture of the three umbrellas, seems painted to prove that a pope could be humble on some occasions, however arrogant on others. Dandolo's Assault of Constantinople, by Palma, is marvellously forcible. The glories of the republic are here figured forth, as if such fame was never to decay, but, above all, the black veil which

covers the space where Marino Faliero should be, usurps the attention and saddens the brilliant colouring of the gorgeous walls of the Doge's palace.

From the palace to the prisons the transition is natural at Venice. After wandering in a state nearly of bewilderment at their grandeur, when seen for the first time, through numerous saloons full of the richest specimens of art, the stranger is led to view the Pozzi, and though the Sotto Piombi is no longer shewn, those horrible prisons are pointed to, and memory supplies the rest. The Bridge of Sighs is closed, and it requires some interest to be allowed to "stand" on it, and look down on the blue waters which roll beneath its gloomy arch. We rowed under it very often, and kept it long in our sight, but were unable to "reach the right reading" of the poet, as we did not exert any particular energy to obtain permission that the door leading to it might be opened for our benefit.

I threaded the mazes of many a dismal passage, and looked shudderingly into numerous cells, too horrible for a lingering visit. On the darkened walls may still be traced lines, immortalized in Byron's notes, which the cicerone sullenly reads for the stranger's edification, hoping to increase his *buono mano*, but evidently disliking to awaken the severity of feeling which such sights excite, towards the beautiful and cruel Lady of the Sea. The man whose torch lighted up these hideous dens for us,

assured us, as we wandered up and down, now mounting, now descending narrow and intricate stairs, that the dungeons were by no means uncomfortable, that they had been much traduced, that there was no damp, and he seemed to think, quite

"light enough for tears."

This there was no contradicting, and as the citizens of the Republic exhibit these memorials of their own crimes and cruelties as little as possible, and have altered them as much as prisons can be changed, perhaps they do not create quite so much disgust as they did formerly; I have, myself, "supped so full of horrors" of this description in the many castle oubliettes of France, that, compared with them, the Pozzi of Venice did not seem pre-eminent. The cells set apart for political prisoners are as wretched as those for felons, but our cicerone observed that no one was ever put into these pleasant retreats without having *deserved* the opportunity for solitary meditation, which those who bestowed the boon upon them were seldom in haste to interrupt.

As a proof, say the friends of Venice, of the agreeable position of the Sotto Piombi, those chambers that were once prisons, are now eagerly sought by workmen for their various craft, in consequence of their lightness and convenience—as they are so near the sky, they may probably suit the workers in fine gold, or bead work, who, nevertheless, per-

haps do not regret the possibility of leaving the locality whenever it suits them to do so.

Strange is it, after peering into the dim cells of the Pozzi, again to descend to the glories of Saint Marc, and to revel amongst the treasures of the Basilica, to stand before those bronze and silver gates where art has exhausted itself to produce incomparable beauty, to enter those pillared domes, and tread on that mosaic floor, wrought into every pattern which Arabic invention could conceive of delicacy, to glide about amongst transparent pillars of oriental alabaster, of sculptured bronze, and of rainbow tinted marble; and to pause at the jewelled shrine of the *Pala d'oro*.

This splendid relic is one of the chief boasts of the treasure of Saint Marc, and as a specimen of Byzantine art, is indeed without price. It has been kept with great care, and frequently repaired and renewed, and presents a gorgeous aspect, glittering with gems, and covered with inscriptions.

Although wondrously imposing, it is scarcely so beautiful as the smaller altar of San Ambrogio at Milan, nor is the sculpture equal to that fine work of art; again the shrine of San Carlo Borromeo, in the Duomo of Milan, is grander, but yet the 'scattered pearls' of the Pala, and its enamels and countless jewels arrest and rivet the attention in a most agreeable manner.

Every where the roofs of this magnificent church glitter with gold and coloured mosaic, both within,

without, and in the galleries of entrance, and a ceaseless source of enjoyment is here ever ready for the admirer of Eastern splendour, in tracing the treasures which every inch of San Marc displays. If I had the good fortune to live a long summer in Venice, I would not allow a day to pass without entering this unrivalled building, and becoming acquainted with its minutest particulars, for from the floor to the roof all is perfection, and all courts the closest inspection. Alas! I observed with sorrow, that the beautiful flooring has been undermined by frequently repeated floods, which in winter sometimes cover it for some inches in height, and it is now so irregular, that it is difficult to walk steadily along its variegated and uneven surface.

CHAPTER XXI.

SKILL OF GONDOLIERI—GARDEN IN THE AIR—BANKING TRANSACTIONS—THE FUNERAL GONDOLA—CONVENTO DELLA CARITA—GENTIL BELLINI'S MIRACLE—TITIAN'S FIRST AND LAST PICTURE—MURANO GLASS WORKS—BAMBINO—GIRLS—VENETIAN DIALECT—CHAINS—MANINI—FOSCARI—THE DOGE'S DEATH—TITIAN AND GIORGIONE—MANFRINI PALACE—PORDENONE'S WIGS—ST. JOSEPH'S HONESTY—ISLANDS OF THE LAGUNE—TORCELLO.

One morning we rowed through several of the back streets of Venice, having some business to transact in the mercantile quarter, and I was much entertained in observing the agile manner in which the gondolieri contrive to elude each other as they shoot by and turn corners rapidly. I can imagine that in these parts of the city there may be occasionally bad smells from the canals: this day, at an early hour, was extremely sultry, and our oars, as they dipped into the sluggish waters, did not procure us the sweetest odours; withered leaves and market refuse came floating down the narrow way mixed with the native sea-weed, but all was tending towards the wide space where impurities are swept off into the broad sea.

Our gondola paused at a flight of steps of mean appearance, where we landed, and, entering through an archway, came into a small gloomy court with a well in the centre, of very antique and neglected

appearance. Along silent narrow passages and up dark staircases we were led to the secret chambers of a banker, whose ministry we sought, and at length reached his retreat. Few visits are more solemn than those paid to an official of this calling, and few moments are less amusing than those spent in anticipation of your claims being allowed. You are apt, on these occasions, to review your own character, reflect on your appearance, and remain in doubt as to the answer which may be returned to your appeals, and the impression which your aspect may have created on those whom you wish to propitiate. Some informality may render your papers of no avail or your motives suspected; every clerk at his desk, silently urging his pen, appears little less than an inquisitor, and the head of all is equal to the grand master himself, as long as he is still occupied in reading your passport or your bill of exchange.

Most assuredly all these terrors were felt by a tall, awkward-looking, rosy-faced countryman of ours who sat uneasily on a bench opposite that where we expected our fate, while his letters were being looked over by a sharp grey-eyed little man in a very shabby costume—the Shylock who could advance 'monies' to the Antonios who sought his aid. The ruddy hue of our compatriot paled and glowed alternately, and his native *mauvais-honte* seemed painfully increased as he found there were witnesses to his examination; how great, therefore, must have been his satisfaction when the little tyrant, who

held his destiny in his power, descended from his high stool and advanced towards him with extended hand, bidding him welcome to Venice in the blandest terms, uttered in very strange French. Our friend's reply was in an accent approaching but little nearer to the true Parisian, his agitation probably having somewhat impaired his powers of expression; but he was evidently relieved and happy, and descended to his gondola accompanied by a clerk bearing a heap of

"Yellow, glittering, precious gold,"

or silver, in a huge bag, and he, no doubt, found himself once more upon the waters quite another man.

Opposite the room where we waited, across the narrow canal, as I looked through the dirty windows I observed a pretty garden placed on a platform on the third story of the house, where geraniums, pomegranates, and orange trees were blooming in great beauty. There was something very curious in this garden in the air, and it was singularly pleasing in the midst of the gloomy street which it enlivened.

As our gondola was advancing from the narrow water-street into the broad lagune another glided noiselessly past, of so ominous a character as to be quite startling. The whole was black as usual, but, exposed plainly to view was a coffin, by the side of which sat either the undertaker or a mourner, with

a face so deadly pale and a countenance so dismal, that, at the first glance, it seemed no other than that of the corpse. As rapid as lightning this lugubrious cortège darted by, leaving a strangely uncomfortable impression behind in its track. It is always sufficiently mournful to meet a funeral in the street, but to find one in the watery path of a narrow canal, is an incident, to a stranger, peculiarly melancholy.

The open and brilliant canalazo, however, held out its glittering arms to console us, and a fresh breeze springing up, wafted away all remembrance which could sadden the beauties of Venezia la Bella for a moment.

We hurried to the Academia, and were soon busied amongst the pictures in its halls. Here Titian's glorious Assumption of the Virgin presents the holy mother, of celestial beauty, surrounded by wreaths of dark-winged angels, supernaturally real. One seraphic being in the front of the picture has, however, an inexplicably stiff leg, from which I in vain tried to turn my eyes to the beautiful forms and faces which shine in the canopy of clouds, and sustain them around the chief figure.

Bassano's bold and fine conceptions are here in full force; his Raising of Lazarus is a most imposing picture. There is a picture, by Pordenone, called the Election of the First Bishop of Venice, which is extremely striking. The figure of St. John the Baptist, with his foot on a broken pillar,

in the foreground, is very grand. There is a strange jumble of saints and prelates in this composition, but the effect of the whole is remarkably good.

The St. Marc of Tintoretto is wonderfully drawn; the saint hovering in the air above the figures, is a masterpiece of art.

Paul Veronese has an Assumption of great power, but not altogether satisfactory: the figure in white, in the foreground, does not please, though it attracts the eye.

The Academia was, in former days, a religious establishment—the Convento della Carità—and the chamber that was the sacristy is very beautiful; it is full of ancient pictures by Vivarini, Murano, Mattea of Bologna, and others of the fifteenth century, quaint but graceful, and possessing infinite beauties of their own. The two Bellinis have some curious specimens scattered in different salons: one amused me extremely, the canvass being covered with little winged creatures, perfectly red, with most energetic countenances. Gentil Bellini has preserved the memory of a miracle which occurred at Venice, and which gives him an opportunity of representing the costume of his own time in a most animated manner: the architecture of the streets of Venice is accurately given, and the picture is thus extremely curious and valuable. It appears that some priests had been overturned into the canal, on the occasion of a procession, and were in great danger of drowning, but were saved

by the elevation of the cross, which some of the party had the presence of mind to think of, and all got safely to dry land. They are floating about in the water, while an immense crowd, in which each figure is clearly delineated, is gazing on them from the bridges, windows, and quays.

There are also several portraits of ancient Venice and her picturesque inhabitants, by Mansueti and Sebastiani, which are extremely interesting, and from the hand of Salviati are many charming Venetian groups.

Titian's beautiful Presentation of the Virgin, his St. John, all golden light which illumines the sleeping lamb, and Leonardo's Christ at Supper, of gigantic dimensions, are each of power equal to their exquisite colouring and grace.

Marco Basaiti has a picture of Christ Praying, in which is a monk reading. The composition struck me as very original and admirable. Over an arch in front of the picture hangs a lamp, by which the recluse is studying the sacred volume containing the history of his Saviour, and the painter has presented to the eye of the spectator the vision which the reader's mind embraces, which fills the rest of his canvass.

Titian's first and his last works are in this fine collection, and are seen with extreme interest. The first is full of genius, but stiff and somewhat laboured, at least, in comparison with the last, which is unfinished. The latter represents Christ dead; the colouring is cold and grey, and every part of the

picture is so solemn and awful that whoever looks on it remains silent for some time, after the sad scene he has witnessed.

One picture of Bassano's pleased me extremely; it is rich, deep, and dark, with a range of fine pillars in the foreground, between which an angel is flying with great rapidity. The illusion is quite complete.

Palmo Vecchio's Woman taken in Adultery is impressive and grand, and there is a very fine Virgin, by Lucca Giordano, in his Christ taken down from the Cross, in which the colouring is superb. Marconi's picture of the Virgin and Dead Christ is also fine, but the line of the figures and the cross in the foreground appeared to me a little too formally even.

I observed some works of an artist quite unknown to me, who may have been the master of Angelica Kauffman, so like are his paintings to her's: he is Francisco Maggiotto, and some of the specimens are full of both the grace and the defects of his imitator.

After having wearied my eyes, though not my mind, amongst the treasures of the Academia, I was not sorry to row over the Lagune, to the little island of Murano, once famous all over the world for its glass works; there is but little at the present moment to interest in these works, beyond the mere curiosity of the performance: the workmen at their furnaces have a strange unearthly Salamander-like appearance: as they draw long tubes of glass out of

the fire and transfer them rapidly to other hands, the whole transaction has very much the effect of magic to the uninitiated.

I was much more pleased with a small establishment within the city, where, however, I saw nothing produced of more importance than beads, such as are worn by the females of the lower classes.

In one room were seated, in rows, several men and women busy before a gas flame close to their eyes. One handsome young woman seemed proud of shewing us the mysteries of the craft, and formed several beads for our instruction and amusement, painting the minute flowers and spots on them with a fiery pencil, in the most delicate manner: but though curious, there is nothing beautiful in the work produced, and I cannot understand how the establishment can pay its expenses, since its productions are of so mean a kind. I saw many articles in beads at Venice not at all novel or worthy of remark, though the shops are filled with them. The *mezzara*, or handkerchief worn on the head by Venetian belles is to be excepted, and some pretty spun-glass screens of a very graceful pattern mounted in ivory; but the skill of Germany, France, and England, I believe, has long since rendered the fame of Venice for excellence in this art a mere tradition. Probably it was out of a Venice glass, as they were once so renowned for their occult properties, that Luther was drinking at the Diet of Worms, where, it is reported, that a Jewish physician received 2,000 ducats to poison

him: the elector of Treves had there invited him to dinner, and just as he raised a glass filled with wine to his lips, the glass broke to shivers, and the wine was spilt. The accident surprised the company, but Luther coolly remarked, as he set the broken glass down: "The wine was not destined for me. The fracture was probably owing to the abrupt transition from heat to cold."

The beads made at Murano were called formerly *Margaritini*, but are now known as *perle;* why they should be so designated is not very clear, as they do not imitate *pearls* in any respect.

The prettiest thing I saw, at the glass works, was a lovely little Bambino, who looked like one of the cherubs in Titian's or Bassano's pictures, which I had just left. A beautiful young girl was holding it, and I found its mother was the pretty woman who had made us the beads. Several other remarkably handsome girls left off their work to attend to our questions, and I was extremely struck with the grace, ease, and remarkable courtesy of manner they shewed during our rather prolonged visit. Every one of them had fine eyes and hair, and though negligent in their dress, were distinguished in manner. It was impossible to have met with a more favourable specimen of the style of persons of their class in Venice, and I went away most pleasingly impressed in their favour. The accent and dialect of Venice does not, however, strike me as so pleasing as I expected. I have often heard people who are

well acquainted with Italy admire the language as spoken here, but I missed the beautiful, high-sounding terminations which had so much delighted my ear in the course of my journey, and which I was grieved to lose so soon; the dialect is said to possess much softness, and, no doubt, to a practised ear, may be more pleasing from contrast.

Day after day at Venice there are new sights and scenes to be viewed, all possessing great interest; as regards the commerce of the great city, every one will be disappointed, as well in the glass works as the manufactory of chains, once so important, and now so insignificant. As for the chains themselves, they are singularly useless and fragile: the least exertion of a "wanton's bird," if attached to the hand of its mistress, would snap the delicate band at once, and it requires a coil of them to make the slightest effect. We only found two men in the obscure premises where the trade of Venice in these golden fetters now shrouds itself, and we saw nothing worth a moment's notice there.

Amongst the many churches full of rich marbles and pictures The Scalzi is the pride of the city, where the last Doge, Manini, lies buried. There is a forest of marble pillars of the greatest beauty here, and the walls and altars are radiant with gilding: amidst all this repose the ashes of the heart-broken prince, who is said to have pined away with grief at the fall of Venice, and the triumph of her Austrian rival.

The tomb of the unfortunate Doge Foscari, is in the venerable and majestic church of the Frari or Santa Maria Gloriosa, one of the earliest and most interesting in Venice. The Doge's monument is very magnificent and solemn, covered with statues, and supported by wreathed pillars, ornamented by rich pinnacles and ornaments. That of another Doge, is still more elaborate and beautiful, and piles of white and black marble rise in honour of other of the great men of the Republic: amongst them, but looking cold and meagre in their vicinity, is a monument to Canova, from a design of his own. Anywhere else this tomb, in modern taste, would appear to more advantage, but it does not seem of a piece with the rich works of Bregni and Pisano. Nevertheless the shadowy figures are full of grace and sorrowful beauty. Titian is buried here, beneath a slab: who, since Canova failed, is worthy to raise a monument to the great master, one of the triumphs of whose art hangs over a neighbouring altar? Like Shakespeare,

> "He in our wonder and astonishment,
> Has built himself a life-long monument."

This simple slab and the absence of a monument to one of whom Venice has so much reason to be proud, may remind one of the unostentatious burial of another great man, whose eloquence had rendered him as well known at Venice as at other cities, where he had been sent ambassador by Lewis XII. of France, the celebrated Budæus, on whose quiet en-

tombment without demonstration Melin de St. Gelais writes:

"Qui est celui que tout le monde suit?
Las! c'est Budé au cercueil estendu.
Pourquoi n'ont faict les cloches plus grand bruit?
Son nom sans cloche est assez espandu.
Que n'a t'on plus en torches despendu,
Suivânt la mode accoustumée et saincte?
Afin qu'il fust par l'obscur entendu,
Que des Français la lumière est estiente."

The monument to the Pesaro family reaches to the ceiling of the church, and is of amazing boldness and richness: appropriate to the spot, and fine in itself, though somewhat startling in its taste. Altogether the Frari is full of objects of exciting interest, and should be visited many times, because the Foscari tomb is sure to absorb all attention on a first acquaintance: the mournful sound of the bell of St. Marc, whose voice, proclaiming his successor, stunned and killed the unfortunate old man, rings too plainly in the ears, and the poet's sad drama is too fresh in the memory to allow other wonders to be appreciated.

The pictures which, on the whole, pleased me most in Venice, were the row of gems in the Manfrini palace, by Titian and Giorgione, "the portrait of himself and wife and son," by the latter is truth itself: it matters little who are really represented by these exquisite portraits; the group is perfectly true to nature and full of grace and feeling: the female it not so lovely as I expected, but her *reality*

is the charm of the picture: she looks somewhat indifferent to the devoted, earnest, and tenderly admiring glance of he who "leans over her enamoured," rather as if she "listened afar," for the footstep of another: the countenance of her adorer cannot be equalled, and the animated boy who seems bringing tidings to both is charming. In colour, expression, drawing and fidelity, this picture seems to me quite faultless. Near it stands the Queen of Cyprus, the majestic and interesting Catherine Cornaro, three quarter length, breathing and speaking. The daughter of the Republic, as the adopted beauty was called, is magnificently dressed in a very curious costume: her robes are covered with jewels, a ruby of great value is worn on her bosom, and buttons of ruby fasten her dress to her waist: her tiara is studded with the richest gems of rainbow hues; rising above her beautiful brows is an eastern feather of jewels, which actually glitters in the light, and pearls are scattered profusely over her head-dress. Her sleeves are gorgeously embroidered and brocaded, her arms are beautifully drawn, and the pretty hands are joined in an easy and simple attitude. Nothing can be more graceful and attractive than this delightful portrait, which is equalled only by that of Ariosto, one of the most living heads that ever animated canvass with golden light. After having looked on this wonderful picture for some time one seems quite acquainted with the great recorder of Orlando's fury, whose beauty it appears

must have been equal to his genius, for a finer face and features never were beheld.

Giorgione's fair one with a guitar is worthy to form one of this constellation of treasures, whose transcendant merit eclipses that of all others in this fine collection.

A second visit to the Manfrini palace may enable the lover of the beautiful in art to see and enjoy many of the finest pictures in Venice. I observed a Sasso Ferrato female head singularly like a recollection I have preserved of Miss O'Neill's face in one of her quietly expressive moods. Two heads by Rubens are remarkably fine studies for some large picture. A beautiful *small* Paul Veronese struck me as lovely; it represents the Virgin crowned, surrounded by an atmosphere of angels, like wreaths of flowers. A Virgin by Palma Vecchio, beauty itself, a marriage of the Virgin by Pordenone, not less so; but a curious contrast to another of his on a sacred subject, in which are several women with pretty faces, but strangely disfigured by wearing over their own hair large *frizzled wigs* of light colour: if this was a fashion of his day it was little suited to the time he represents of the scene, and is grotesque in the extreme.

Gregorio Lazarini has a charming group of the Virgin, Child, and Joseph: the child is all grace and infantine beauty: the mother looks very busy with a pretty work basket at her feet.

Lord Byron's disgust at the portraits of Petrarch

and his Laura is not surprising: they are surpassingly hideous.

In a room which opens to a really large garden, necessarily a rarity in Venice, is a collection of shells and fossils of some value, and here are three cabinet pictures, the boast of the Palazzo, though infinitely less interesting in my opinion than the immortal portraits: this continual recurrence of the same subject cannot fail to weary the mind beyond the power of admiring the genius which goes far to surmount its monotony. One of these three, however, has a feature which renders it peculiar, for Ludovico Caracci has represented the holy family just landed from a ferry-boat, and Saint Joseph occupied in paying the ferryman, a proof of attention to business which such personages have rarely the credit of possessing. The other two gems are a Magdalen by Correggio, exquisitely finished, and a group in Raphael's early style of much beauty.

The islands of the Lagune invite from afar as they rise out of the blue waters, and one of the most interesting and ancient is that of Torcello, whose church I was most anxious to see. That at Murano is so modernized that, although of the 9th century, it has little left to attract except its form, a few Greek marble pillars, and a rich pavement, similar to St. Mark's.

We rowed past and between the islands of the Pescatores, which form a populous suburb to Venice, and glided along beneath garden walls over which

bunches of pomegranate blushed, and sweet flowers threw their odour on the early morning breeze. It was curious to pass boats laden with fruit, vegetables, and flowers from these islands, looking like those eastern barks filled with offerings to some deity secluded amidst the reeds and palm trees of the Ganges or the Nile. Instead of the bakers, and butchers' carts which meet one in most cities, one is encountered on the Lagune by boats, some filled with loaves piled up in huge pyramids, and others full of merchandize of different kinds, all rowing towards the mart where the produce of the islands is expected by their nursing mother.

Torcello is a very wild, desolate, mysterious spot, which we reached after a row of between two and three hours from Venice. It is now the lonely abode of a few fishermen, whose slovenly cottages are scattered round the extensive remains of the once magnificent churches, the pride of the city when it flourished in power and wealth, and the abode of mighty bishops, who gave laws to neighbouring nations.

The appearance of these ruined temples is extremely picturesque, and it is impossible not to see in them the remains of Pagan worship. The style is somewhat rude and ponderous, and the remnants of carving, both in figures on the walls, in the font, and in the capitals of columns, are strangely like many remains of Saxon art which one meets with in France.

There are window shutters to Santa Maria formed of stone slabs, very remarkable and unusual, probably required to protect the church from the violence of the wind in this exposed spot. An immensely high campanile-tower rises above the Duomo, and appears as if formerly well able to stand a siege. The church of Santa Fosca is so close by the cathedral that it seems to form a part of the ruins, scattered as they now are over a wide and uneven grassy plain, and there is a crowd of circular ends of buildings supported by rows of pillars, with round arches and zig-zag ornaments, and temple-formed chapels, overgrown with trees, rising amidst a green meadow which is called the Piazza di Torcello, in the midst of which is a rude stone, called the 'Throne of Attila,' now nearly embedded in the earth, and covered with the long waving grass which chokes up the path to it.

CHAPTER XXII.

BOTANIC GARDEN—THE LAST EVENING IN VENICE—THE AVE MARIA—ANDREA THE BAKER OF MAZORBO—THE FUNERAL AT THE CAMALDOLESI CONVENT—THE MURDERER—SUNSET ON THE GIUDECCA—THE HOUR OF AVE MARIA—THE DISAPPOINTMENT—YOUNG VENICE—THE PALACES—NIGHT AND STORM—OMENS—LEWIS XII—CASSANDRA FIDELIO.

THERE is a Botanic Garden at Venice, rising from the midst of the sea, quite a little treasure in this land, where trees and flowers might otherwise be almost thought a fable. It is well laid out, with charming walks and bowers, full of pomegranates and roses, where the voices of the nightingale and thrush welcomed us as we climbed a pretty mount, thickly covered with flowering shrubs, and paused at the top to look over the waste of waters—

"Where Venice sits in state, throned on her hundred isles."

Just behind the garden a huge heap of earth and considerable confusion proclaimed that this was the spot from whence the great viaduct of the railway began. The works were in progress, and in a short time, no doubt, the hissing, rattling engine will rush along with its rapid wings close to the quiet pomegranate grove, now so tranquil and retired.

The gardener of the establishment, however, did not regret the circumstance: he appeared to be rather utilitarian than arcadian in his notions, and looked forward to the increase of commerce, which he hoped would bring more patronage to his beautiful garden, which, strange to say, the Venetians neglect, although unique in their neighbourhood, preferring the evening promenade on the Piazza San Marco, and to sip their coffee or eat their ice to the music of a band, instead of to the song of birds and in the shade of trees, and preferring the smell of cigars to the perfume of the rose garden!

The last evening I spent in Venice it seemed as if the good spirit that had presided over the weather and presented the beautiful city in its very best possible aspect during my stay, had resolved, by a capo d'opera, to impress my mind so fully with its excelling charms, that no envious cavilling, no critical contradiction, no experience of misfortune on the spot, should at any future period have power to obliterate the memory of one of the most enchanting scenes which nature and art combined could ever offer to the eye and the mind.

I had lingered long beneath the arcades of the Piazza—had looked again and again on the carved and gilded pillars of the palace and the church, and the sun was just setting when I once more entered the gondola, which lay amongst a crowd of others belonging to the gay promenaders on the square of the Campanile, in order to row about as long as pos-

sible in the Giudecca, and observe the effects of sky and sea, always splendid at this hour.

I had been told of an occurrence which took place every evening at eight o'clock, and intended, precisely at that hour, that the gondola should lie on its oars at a certain spot in order that I might witness it. The story I had heard, which had caused my desire to do so, was as follows:

One evening in winter, when the wind was high and dark clouds flitted gloomily over the surface of the lurid sky, a young man, with a baker's basket on his shoulder, was returning across the Piazza San Marco from the Merceria towards the quay where his boat was moored, about to return to the Isola di Mazorbo where he lived, and where his young wife, to whom he had only been married a few weeks, was expecting him anxiously, as she observed the lowering aspect of the heavens, and feared that his little voyage across the Lagune would prove dangerous, or at least unpleasant. Andrea thought of her too, and quickened his steps as he passed the Porta della Carta, when a deep groan fell upon his ear, and startled him from his musings on the happy home which he hoped so soon to reach.

He paused a moment, and again the groan was repeated, as if it proceeded from some person in great agony: it was beginning to be very dark, and he could scarcely distinguish any object clearly, but beneath one of the arches of the church of St.

Mark, he thought he perceived something lying on the pavement: he approached, and stooped down to convince himself, when a flash of vivid lightning shewed him plainly the body of a man prone on the pavement, in whose body the glittering hilt of a dagger was visible. He uttered an exclamation of horror as he knelt down and endeavoured to raise the injured person, he placed his hand on the dagger, and drew it from the wound, and was yet hanging over the body with the weapon in the air, when he felt his arm arrested: flashes of light glowed on the marble pillars round, and in an instant he was surrounded by a party of police, whose torches shewed the scene in all its horror.

There lay a murdered cavalier, whose last groan Andrea had heard, and covered with his blood and still holding the dagger reeking with the crimson tide, knelt the unfortunate young man, who was not for a single instant believed to be other than his assassin.

At that time, for several centuries have passed since the event which tradition records, justice was summary in her proceedings. Few questions were asked,—no answer, no appeal, no protestations were deemed worthy to be placed in opposition to the glaring facts before the judges, and on the very spot where he was supposed to have committed the murder, the ill-fated Andrea was condemned to expiate his crime.

There is a projecting pipe, which runs out between

the carved pinnacles of the church, and to that a cord was immediately fastened, the supposed culprit was attached to the fatal noose, was swung in the air, and exactly as the great clock of the palace tolled the hour of eight and the bells of Saint Mark rung forth the Ave Maria, the body of the unfortunate Andrea was seen hanging from the height, and the pitying angels, who hovered above the scene, were bearing his soul to a place of bliss.

There was a death in the Isola di Mazorbo a short time afterwards, and a funeral boat bore the body of a young woman, once the beauty of the island, to the convent church of the Camaldolesi, in Murano, where, beneath the cloisters, a grave was made, and a stone placed, and a sum of money paid by the officiating priest to the convent. That sum had been sent anonymously to the good ecclesiastic, immediately on the death of the young wife of Andrea, the baker of Mazorbo, with a charge that it should pay for the expenses of her burial, and for a mass to be said for the soul of herself and her husband.

Many years passed away, when the priest of San Michele was summoned to a death-bed: the penitent was a man of distinction in Venice, who had formerly borne a character for dissipation, by no means uncommon to his class, but since the death of an only brother, of whom he was the heir, and who was no other than the murdered cavalier for whose assassination Andrea had suffered, he

had changed his course of life, and had been looked upon as a

"wiser and a better man."

The revelations, however, that he made on his death-bed, were such as to convince the magistrates of Venice that a little more inquiry would have done them greater credit than the summary justice to which they had devoted the unfortunate and innocent Andrea. The brother avowed himself the murderer, and directed that, in the hope of its proving some expiation for his crime, the memory of the accused should be cleared, and his fame re-established, and that, in perpetuity, a mass should be said for the soul of Andrea, and a candle lighted outside St. Mark, on the very spot where he was executed, every night as the bell tolled eight, and the service of the Ave Maria was announced. For this he left ample funds, and the remainder of his wealth he dedicated to the church for the benefit of his own soul, the welfare of which he entrusted to the prayers of the holy fraternity who were to benefit by his donations.

The sun went down brilliantly, the heat was great, but there was every now and then a refreshing breeze, which cooled the air, as we rowed backwards and forwards along the Giudecca, surrounded by all those fairy objects which make this place a scene of wonders. The gorgeous churches of San Giorgio and il Redentore, rose as if at once out of

the deep green transparent waters; and the Zitelli, a school for young girls, presented its line of building glowing in the golden light. The lead covered domes of the church of la Salute, were touched on the other hand, with a pale blue lurid light, for the reflection of a thunder cloud was over them; every part of this magnificent building was clearly defined against the mass of dark clouds which formed the background, and so singular was the effect produced by the lights and shades, that it seemed as if a sheet of snow had fallen and rested on the roof of shining silver which pierced the air: every marble pillar, and every step of the long flight before the church, came brightly out as they dipped into the sea at their feet. Beyond this, towards the Palazzo Nuevo, the sky was all rich orange and yellow and rose colour, the last soft tint being reflected over the wide Lagune to the buildings opposite, and dwelling on the red towers of the Islands: every sail shone crimson in the ruddy glow, or caught the blue phosphoric tint, which divided the hues of the atmosphere.

Towards the Piazzetta, where the golden yellow ended, and a soft pale green sunk into the still bright blue, day's reign seemed lingering to the last; here the lion of St. Mark, and St. Theodore, each on their exalted pillars, were defined sharply, and the Doge's palace lifted up its lace-work parapets, shewing the fragile embroidery which has outlasted ages, and all the glories of the merchant monarchs of time-conquered Venice. A rainbow rose over all, spanning

the Giudecca from side to side, now brighter, now paler, and tinging every object with its colours.

As we lay gazing on the unequalled beauty of this scene, new to me, but common to those who are fortunate enough to spend much of their time amidst these waters, a few large heavy drops began to fall splashing in the sea, a hollow growl rose from the distance, and we rowed briskly towards the quay of St. Mark, for the hour of Ave Maria was approaching.

Scarcely had we neared the Mola when a violent gust of wind came sweeping over the Lagune, the waves rose high, the thunder's voice made itself heard, and every symptom of a storm was apparent. Still we lingered, for in a few minutes I thought we could not fail to see the accustomed wax light, borne by two priests to the pinnacle above the statue of the Virgin on the outside of the church, in memory of poor Andrea, but the wind became more and more violent, the hour of Ave Maria passed and no light appeared: the gusty evening had prevented the usual ceremony, and the mass was performed inside.

There was little time to stop for regrets, as it became obvious that the Giudecca was no longer a safe place to linger in, and we retired from the shore and took our way along the Canal' Grande, where we were more sheltered, and on our way to our Leone Bianco.

Notwithstanding the threatening aspect of the sky, the rain did not descend, and the wind lulled a

little; we met a crowd of gondolas hurrying towards the Piazza, the fashionable place of evening rendezvous: ladies and cavaliers sat within their dark retreats, full dressed and gay, regardless of the storm which might overtake them. A beautiful boat darted past us, rowed by two young men, in violet velvet jackets and white trousers, the best gondolieri on the canal, whose graceful movements contrasted with the less elegant air of the common boatmen: these, we found, were a son of the Podesta and one of his friends, the lively representatives of *young Venice.* The Podesta himself more sedately throned in his gondola, with sober but handsome liveried boatmen succeeded: the Duchess de Berri and her *sposo*, with rowers dressed in green, next glided by, just as we passed the hotel which she shares with the Vandremini.

The palaces, on each side of the Canal' Grande, looked grand and imposing in the uncertain light, occasionally brought forcibly out by flashes of vivid lightning, which played along their fretted parapets, or glanced against their ranges of marble pillars. A golden light was over the whole face of the Foscari palace, as we turned the circling corner of the canal; Mocenigo glowed with the red fire, and seemed to shiver as the lightning flashed across its rows of windows. The white walls of the Academia, and the ambitious figure of Fame or Venice throned on a lion, before it, looked imposing and grand, rising from the dark waters, with the cold sombre

line of buildings by its side, the remains of the ancient convent della Carità.

Not far off, at the corner of a small canal which leads to the theatre del Fenice, I observed a half finished palazzo, the court of which was encumbered with heaps of marble; on inquiring what it was, and to whom belonging, I was informed that it was the property of a rich Jew who had suddenly appeared in Venice, having acquired a fortune no one could tell how, but before his palace was half finished he had gone off, the works had been stopped and nothing more was known of him.

The fairy fabric of the Ca' d'Oro, in all its ruined beauty, shone down upon the waters as we hurried by, and the opposite palazzo of *Mr. Brown*, one of the handsomest on the Canal, was blazing with lights from its Palladian casements.

The Ca' d'Oro will soon rival all others in its renovated beauties, but, shadow-like as it now is, and by such a light as that by which I beheld it, nothing seemed wanting, either to that or to the Foscari.

We were not led away by exultation at our usual good fortune, so much as Machiavelli accused Venice of being

"Credendosi haver sempre il vento in poppa,"

and were not sorry when we landed at the steps of the hotel, ushered in by a peal of thunder able to destroy all the palaces along the shore. We were scarcely housed before the violence which had been

withheld till night, broke forth, and for several hours all was uproar and confusion in the sea-built city, and a new scene of awful beauty took the place of those she shewed by day.

Night and storm at Venice give rise to many reflections on her fallen state, and all her history rises to the memory. Now she is all glory and wealth, now threatened, now triumphant, now conquered, now crushed, now a mere shadow and a name of beauty.

A modern writer has observed:

"A succession of events which, whether fatal or fortuitous, are by the vulgar looked upon as the certain forerunners of calamity, happened to Venice at this moment. (1208, just before Louis XIIth's invasion.)

"The castle of Brescia was blown up; a galley which had on board 10,000 ducats destined for the relief of Ravenna was lost at sea; the depository of the public archives at Venice suddenly fell down: but the crowning misfortune was the destruction of the arsenal there, which was fired, either by accident or treachery."*

Louis lost no time in fulfilling his part of the unjust treaty to which he had pledged himself, and entered Italy at the head of the *élite* of his cavalry, 20,000 men, as many Swiss mercenaries, and a strong body of French infantry. Some of the greatest heroes in France were in this army. Marshals

* James Bacon's Life and Times of Francis I. 1830.

Trivulzio and Chaumont—Longueville—Charles of Bourbon—Gaston de Foix, then a boy—d'Aubigny, the renowned Scotchman—Robert della Mark, afterwards Maréchal de Fleuranges—la Palice the brave—and the Chevalier Bayard.

When Louis XII. was preparing to attempt the conquest of Venice, excited to the undertaking by the crafty foe of the Republic, Julius II., the Venetian ambassador, Condolmier, in a conversation with the King, remonstrated with him, not only on the injustice of his contemplated proceedings, but their injudiciousness. "The Republic," said he, "has great resources, and it is a perilous enterprise to attack a power governed by so many wise personages."

"Monsieur l'Ambassadeur," replied Louis, "all you tell me is perfectly true, but I shall oppose so many fools to your wise men that they will find it extremely difficult to manage them. Our fools are folks who strike right and left, and will not hear reason when they have once begun."

At this time devoted Venice was menaced on all hands. Julius demanded restitution of the church lands in Romagna, which the Republic had obtained by the expulsion of Cæsar Borgia, and which comprised the cities of Ravenna, Cervia, Faenza, and Rimini: Louis laid claim to the rich district on the left of the Adda, Brescia, Crema, Bergamo, and Cremona. Maximilian resolved to attempt the acquisition of Padua, Verona, Vicenza, and Friuli;

and Ferdinand of Spain resolved to attack the Neapolitan sea-ports which were pledged to Venice for a loan. At a meeting at Cambray in 1508 all these claims were discussed, and the fate of Venice resolved.

Venice has not been wanting in female learning amongst its other distinctions, to render it illustrious. The name of Cassandra Fidelis was once of great celebrity in the north of Italy, and added lustre to her native city. Her family was originally of Milan but had removed to Venice; every member was remarkable for literary attainment of no ordinary kind, and the fair Cassandra, at a very early age, became the theme of universal admiration from her erudition and accomplishments. She applied herself with so much diligence to study, that she acquired such a knowledge of the learned languages as to deserve her reputation of one of the first scholars of the age. Many were the visits she received from sages far and near, and amongst them arrived from Florence, Politiano, the celebrated friend of Lorenzo the Magnificent; it was in 1491 that this distinguished personage came to do her homage, and was so enchanted with her appearance, manners, and profound learning, that the heart of the philosopher appears in some danger. "She is, indeed," he writes to his patron, "a surprising woman, as well from her acquirements in her own tongue as in the Latin, and in my opinion she may be called handsome. I left her, astonished at her talents."

This remarkable woman lived to complete a cen-

tury, a rare occurrence in a literary life, particularly that of a woman of great mind.

Cassandra was not alone in her fame, nor in the admiration felt for female knowledge by the tutor of the great Lorenzo's sons. He had before admired Alessandra, daughter of Bartolomeo della Scala, whose singular beauty was only equalled by her extraordinary endowments. She was a proficient in Latin and Greek, and had studied under the most eminent scholars of the time, to one of whom, Marcello, she gave her hand, much to the discomfiture of Politiano.

Another lady of Sienna, called Cecca, was called by the same gallant admirer of genius, the tenth muse, a title afterwards so often bestowed on mediocrity that it now carries with it little weight.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ADIEU TO VENICE—THE VIADUCT—THE PAIR—OMNIBUS HERO—THE ENCOUNTER—PONTE MOLINO—CITADELLA—FLOURISHING COUNTRY—BASSANO—WALLS AND TOWERS—BEPPO—EZZELINO—BELLA VISTA—CANOVA—VAL SUGANO—CAVALO—DESCENT TO TRENT—THE COUNCIL—THE BISHOP—MENDOZA THE POET—THE RETIREMENT—FEVER AT TRENT—SANTA MARIA MAGGIORE—THE DOM—SANTA PAULINA—TYROLESE COSTUME—PALAZZO GOLLAS.

THE morning arrived when I was obliged to bid adieu to Venice, and infinite was my regret as I stepped into the *black* gondola—in general we had one with a striped awning, during our stay—which was to take us to the custom-house and rail-road.

Amidst many apparently friendly adieux from our guides and hosts, the chief of whom were Lord Byron's black and white friends, we left the hotel stairs, and passed beneath the Rialto. Palace after palace were saluted by me with regret as they faded from my view, but, at the Foscari, we paused and landed, as we found it possible to see the ruined shell on which workmen are now employed preparing it for the restorations which will soon be begun. For many years a host of poor families have lived in these fine chambers, which have been di-

vided and subdivided into small spaces, destroying their symmetry, and making them mere dens of poverty and dirt. All is now free, the partitions are taken down, and the original size and shape can be seen.

They are not very large, nor are there suites of rooms, as in most Italian palaces, forming vistas; the building is more in an English style, irregular but convenient. The staircases are steep and dark, but the lower halls are spacious and grand, and the square court without is extensive and walled, with a fretted parapet of graceful pattern running all round the top. The entrance is to this court from a side canal, but the front of the palace, with all its antique Moorish windows and trefoil pierced *loggie*, is towards the *Canal' Grande*, and is magnificent even in its extreme decay.

Instead of waiting at the railroad station we rowed about the Lagune till the last moment arrived, and approached as near as possible to the viaduct, passing under some of the fine arches, which were completed, and admiring the beauty of the construction. The morning was lovely, and distant Venice, with all her churches, lay touched with the golden light, looking like a fairy city of the sun, just offered to view to be caught up again into its native skies, like the fabled gardens of Al Aden, visited by the fortunate camel seeker, but beheld by the presumptuous monarch of the winding sands for a moment only.

The envious railway soon carried me far from the

most interesting city in Europe, and we went flying on, past festooned groves and corn fields, back to learned and sombre Padua, which wears a more than usually severe aspect when entered after a visit to its romantic neighbour—the Venus who casts Minerva into shade.

Some of our party in the railway omnibus, which waits to carry passengers from the station for about a mile, were, however, by no means grave characters. We had before observed a pair, whose circumstances could not be doubted: they were evidently newly married and on a tour. Both were excessively fine, the gentleman's waistcoat glowing like a colibri's wing, studded with gold, and hung with chains; the lady's appointments all fresh and new, and of the last fashion. Both were young and handsome, and both anxious to appear amiable in each other's eyes, though an occasional yawn on the gentleman's part, and a sleepy languor on the lady's, announced plainly that they considered the necessity of travelling and seeing every thing a labour in which they did not altogether delight. It was soon apparent that they were English by the resolute manner in which they declined conversation, and the contemptuous glances which they cast on all around, disdaining assistance, and bent upon not being imposed on. The consequence of this line of conduct was that they allowed themselves to be set down at the first shabby hotel we paused at in Padua. I felt some pity, and a quixotic desire to tell them they would find better

accommodation where we were going, but the hostility of their manner awed me into silence, and I saw them consigned to their fate, unable to avert it.

I was amused at the appearance of the conductor of the omnibus who was so assiduously attentive in his calling. He was a tall slight young man, and wore a blouse over a smart jacket; his collar was open and thrown back *à la Byron*; his thick shining black hair hung in bunches of natural ringlets on each side of his face, being parted and braided in front; a small red velvet cap, with a gold tassel, was placed on one side of his head, and a carnation was stuck behind his ear. Altogether he was the beau ideal of an omnibus hero, and it was clear that he was perfectly aware of the sensation he created in the breasts of the smiling damsels who greeted him as he passed, gracefully waving his hand, and occasionally kissing it, as we rumbled through the long gloomy arcaded streets of Padova la Dotta, where we slept that night, or rather endeavoured to do so in spite of the clamorous greetings of the bells of San Antonio.

Early the next day we began our journey towards Trent, as our destination was the Tyrol, but had nearly been arrested at our first step: for as we drove out of the great square into one of the long streets which seem interminable, we were encountered by a cab, the driver of which, though there was plenty of room, and he must have seen us

coming at some distance, continued his headlong way till he came directly upon us, and, as our vehicle happened to be the largest, his frail machine was in an instant almost dashed to pieces. Instead of the usual vociferations which, both in England and France, would have accompanied such an event, the crowd collected stood by quite unmoved, except that a few smiles were exchanged; our postillion sat on his horse impassive till the wheels of the two carriages were unlocked by those whom it most concerned. The delinquent did not attempt to justify his stupidity, nor was he reproached by his neighbours, and when he had disengaged himself, and we had ascertained that no one was hurt, we continued our route as quietly as if nothing had occurred, leaving him and his *débris* in the middle of the street.

Padua struck me as before, as one of the most remarkable cities I had ever seen: it possesses considerable grandeur in its buildings, and there is an occasional resemblance, to a certain extent, to Venice, as, for instance, in a piazza where towers a mast, and a fine pillar supported on a pedestal of crouching lions.

The Palazzo della Ragione looked venerable and fine, with its rows of pointed windows, and open Gothic arches, and its enormous roof, rising like the back of some huge antediluvian monster, unshapeable and mysterious. On the Ponte Molino, in a recess in the centre stands a richly decorated statue of the Virgin, and one similar keeps guard

at the city gates. I observed a fine antique church richly carved with three large figures in niches on the walls, but I could not ascertain to which of the saints it was dedicated, or whether it was there that the magician of Padua, Pietro d'Abano, lies buried. It would take a long time to become acquainted with all the churches and institutions of Padua, and if I had not had attractions elsewhere which prevented my affording the time, I should have lingered longer with much satisfaction in the dim strange old town, which, even yet, is full of the memories of by gone days.

Having crossed the Brenta, by a moving bridge, we continued our route along a straight road, bordered by corn fields and mulberry plantations, with uninterrupted lines of festooned vines depending from tree to tree in the most graceful negligence, till we arrived at Cittadella, a fine spacious clean town, with great remains of its former grandeur, still existing in the immense round towers and battlemented walls, which appear to defend the entrance on every side. All the inhabitants, their dark hair adorned with pomegranate blossoms, seemed congregated in the streets, where in front of the houses which are doubtless dark and inconvenient, groups were sitting working or playing at cards. Piles of fruit and flowers attested the luxuriance of the country's productions, and the general aspect of this stoutly defended fortress-city, was that of ease and wealth. The moat, over which we drove,

as we quitted Cittadella, is profound, and the high powerful, ornamented and sharply cut machicolated walls, give an effect of strength and solidity quite imposing.

We drove on, in the bright sun, amidst a chorus of grasshoppers, so loud, that the air rung with their cheerful revelling harvest songs for several miles, where the newly cut corn invited them to sport and chirp away their summer lives. The costume of the peasant girls is here very pretty, and gives a foretaste of Switzerland in the wide white sleeves, and large straw hats. Most of the women have bare feet, and all the men wear red caps with smart dangling black tassels placed upon their long ringlets.

We passed numerous country houses, all handsomely built, and the grounds neatly and well laid out, with no lack of good gates and strong walls, over which the rich treasures of luxuriant gardens appeared in great beauty, throwing their perfume far and wide. Every village has a handsome new church, and prosperity is every where evident, though there is little more of the picturesque to be seen, than if the traveller were in the neighbourhood of a flourishing English town.

The distant mountains of the Tyrol will not, however, be hid, and rise blue and bright in the distance, promising much beauty to come, when the plain country shall be passed.

Bassano is a good country town, full of churches,

some of which are interesting. I was anxious to know if there was any spot supposed to be the birth-place of the great painter, Giacomo da Ponte, called Bassano, here, and immediately inquired; an intelligent boy named Beppo, undertook to guide me to the house, but when we arrived at our destination, I found he had led me to the Duomo of St. Stephen, where some of Bassano's paintings decorated the altars. I thought Beppo's idea very good, for such a house was more worthy to represent the great master's birth-place than any other. Probably he was born in some hovel near the bridge, as his name indicates. To the bridge I accordingly proceeded, which is a fine covered wooden one, thrown over the Brenta. The position of this bridge is magnificent: the river runs foaming and flowing rapidly along, sometimes causing fearful devastations by its inundations, and on every side the scenery is wild and grand in the extreme.

Above the walls of the town rises a huge ruined citadel of great strength, so imposing, and so striking, that it instantly arrests the attention, as it stands frowning on a height over the turbulent river, and commanding the country for many leagues round. Tower after tower, and long interrupted lines of walls are mixed in with the antique roofs of the town, which the rushing Brenta protects or desolates at its pleasure. The high hills crowd round, like huge guards waiting the commands of some tyrant chief to send forth an armed ambush,

and pour down ruin on the region on which they may direct their wrath.

I asked the name of this proud and evil-looking castle, to which Beppo replied, "E il castello di Ezzelino."

I almost started at that terrible name, which called up memories of rapine, murder, and destruction. Here then the tyrant of Northern Italy resided, and it was no other than he who could fill up with his real crimes, the fancied picture I had been sketching of a feudal lord who harassed the neighbouring states.

I lost no time in mounting the height where the castle stands, under the auspices of Beppo, and soon entered the library of the Archbishop, which is in the great tower, and is fitted up with all sorts of modern comfort and conveniences.

From the window a splendid view is obtained, and nothing can be more singular than the contrast between the aspect of the dark threatening building when seen below from the bridge and when entered above.

Beppo entreated me to observe the *bella vista*, of which every inhabitant of Bassano is justly proud, and was equally delighted at my enjoyment of its beauties, and my admiration of the charming domicile of the "arci-prate del' commune" who seemed to be as great a favourite with him as the tower itself, and whose character, reported by him, formed as great a contrast to that of the former occupant of

the castle, as his charming library with its large and beautiful view must do to the dungeon and torture chambers of the monster, whose punishment Dante has recorded in terrible verse.

This appears the region of taste as well as of cruelty, for close by lies Passagno the birth-place of Canova, at the foot of the hills of Asolano.

Our next day's journey was through the splendid district of Val Sugana, and the glorious pass of Cavalo, the scene of the fearful struggles between Napoleon and the Tyrolese in modern times, and between the Austrians and Venetians of old. Views of terrific grandeur and magnificence await the traveller on this route, and though the continued recurrence of the same scenery in succession becomes at length rather wearying to the mind, it is hailed at first with eager admiration. A roaring restless torrent, thundering over rocks keeps up a ceaseless turmoil; now the road runs close beside it, now it mounts high and higher until the way seems lost in the clouds and amongst the pine-woods, but again descends, winding and turning and rising and falling league after league.

Pergine, with the remains of its commanding castle, rises proudly amongst the stupendous scenery which it dominates, and Trent lies in its wide flat valley, at the foot of encircling mountains, with the turbulent Adige flowing past its embattled walls.

The descent to Trent is very fine, and the aspect of this first great town I had reached in the Tyrol

impressed me extremely. Issuing from crowding and overhanging rocks, we proceeded on our downward road for two hours, winding round a magnificent mountain, which, in many places appeared perpendicular, passing through stony villages, where the narrow streets seemed almost closed against our progress, and at every turn coming upon fresh objects of surprising grandeur, till at length we reached the lowest level, and entered the curious old town of Trent, so important in history from the events connected with its famous Council, which called the attention of all Christendom to its decisions, and swayed the fate of so many nations.

The city of Trent and its cathedral presented a somewhat more bustling aspect in December, 1545, than when we walked through its deserted streets and entered the lonely aisles of its great church.

Then the important meeting took place of all the legates, archbishops, bishops, divines, monks, and ambassadors, whose object was to preserve the Roman Catholic faith from the innovations of Luther, and to reform any abuses which might have crept into the holy pale.

In the church of the Trinity the grand assembly met, and went thence in procession to the Cathedral, the choir singing the hymn "Veni Creator." When all were seated the Cardinal De Monte performed the mass of the Holy Ghost, at the end of which he announced, as if especially to brave the opinions of the Protestant Reformers whose first demonstrations

of disgust had been caused by a similar proceeding, a bull of indulgences issued by the Pope, promising a full pardon of sin to all who in the week immediately after the publication of the bull in their respective places of abode, should fast on Wednesday and Friday, receive the sacrament on Sunday, and join in processions and supplications for a blessing on the Council.

After some ceremonies besides, a decree was passed, declaring that the sacred and general Council of Trent was then begun for the praise and glory of the holy and undivided Trinity, the increase and exaltation of true religion, the extirpation of heresy, the peace and union of the church, the reformation of the clergy and Christian people, and the destruction of the enemies of the Christian name.

The Bishop of Bitonto, who addressed the meeting, did not omit to invoke the assistance of the patron saint of the valley of Trent, Saint Virgilius, to bless the undertaking.

Great was the eloquence of this Bishop of Bitonto, who was considered one of the greatest preachers of his age. His name was Cornelio Musso; even before his birth he was dedicated by his mother to the service of St. Francis, and he willingly performed her vow by devoting himself to the order. His memory was so extraordinary that by once hearing a sermon he could retain it and re-deliver it in a manner which might make it pass for his own, imitating equally well the gestures and manner

of the preacher to whom he was indebted. He had great natural eloquence also, and could make orations extempore in a surprising manner.

When he was first sent to Venice to preach during Lent, so little and insignificant did he appear when he mounted the pulpit, that the assembled senators were disagreeably impressed against him, and it required some time before they were reconciled to attend to him. His voice, however, which was so magnificent that it could fill the largest church, soon arrested them, and his extraordinary powers soon made them forget their prejudice.

He has been compared to the nightingale, whose small frame gives no promise of its splendid notes.

One perhaps of the most remarkable personages, his character of poet considered, who figured at this famous Council was the Spanish Ambassador to Venice, Don Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, who is considered the third of the classical poets of Spain. To his brilliant poetical genius he joined the reputation of one of the greatest politicians and generals who distinguished the brilliant epoch of Charles the Fifth's reign. His severity was, however, equal to his talents, and his bitter enmity to liberty has much dimmed the lustre of his name. He was learned in the Hebrew, Arabic and Greek tongues, a great collector of eastern manuscripts, and a devoted admirer of literature. His eloquence was remarkable, and the speech he made at the Council of Trent in the interest of his master the Emperor

is said to have excited the admiration of all Christendom.

Yet, strange to say, this severe and learned personage is more known to the world by an extravagantly comic work, which has been translated into most European languages, than by any other of his remarkable acts. He is the author of Memoirs of that celebrated rogue, Lazarillo de Tormes, the first of his class who has been immortalized by genius.

Mendoza made himself unfortunately conspicuous as a lover, a part as little in unison with his senatorial position as that of being the historian of a cheat. While ambassador at Rome, he excited the vengeance of a rival, by his gallantries: a contention took place between them, and the minister-poet, to avoid the dagger of his opponent, threw him over a balcony into the street. Mendoza, for this undignified proceeding, was committed to prison, where he amused his loneliness by composing *Redondilhas* to his mistress's eye-brow!

He was banished to his native city Grenada, where he wrote an account of the Moorish Revolt in the Alpuxarra, a masterpiece of Spanish history. He died at Valladolid, in 1575, and his valuable library he left to the King of Spain.

The verses of Mendoza, are as unlike his public character, as those of some of the persecuting troubadour enemies of the Albigenses, and it is somewhat difficult to believe that the fiery and violent orator at the Council of Trent, the tyrant of Sienna, and

the poet who could pour forth gentle humble strains, like the following, are one and the same: except, indeed, the last lines of the following poem should betray his real character.

THE RETIREMENT.*

Another world is mine in thought,
Another place, another home,
Another time by fancy brought,
Where I may close the days to come.

A life all calm and passionless,
In that retreat shall be my own,
Where I my king may thank and bless,
And serve him for his love alone.

And if the means to live in peace,
His clemency to me extend,
I will rejoice, nor seek increase—
If not, content shall be my friend.

Softly shall glide each careless day,
My food I'll take at any hour,
My nights shall gently pass away,
And restless visions have no power.

In story then I'll lead again
Those hosts that in the East I led,
And bore the haughty flag of Spain
Midst fields of danger and of dread.

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* Otro mundo es el mio, otro lugar,
Otro tiempo el que busco: &c.
See Sismondi, Span. Lit.

Matrons and dames and damsels dear,
Shall listen to the record true,
And coward monks shall shake to hear
The glories that of old I knew.

If an ambassador should stray,
And in my cottage rest awhile,
His worthy deeds he will display,
Tell of his dangers and his toil——
But none the secrets of his heart may share,
Altho' a dagger sought them hidden there.

The Council being held at Trent was exceedingly unpopular at Rome. The Pope dreaded the diminution of his power, and his courtiers feared the loss of their emoluments: the sturdiness of the Reformers' zeal disconcerted them; the pertinacity of the Spaniards, and the dissension and opposition of the different Catholic members alarmed them; it was much desired that the Council should be transferred to some place within the Papal dominions, and a ruse was resorted to to frighten the assembly away.

It was reported that a contagious fever had broken out at Trent, and every one became so anxious for his own safety, that in a short time the prelates and legates fled from the meeting like so many frightened hares. Some, however, kept their ground, and the rest, for very shame, were obliged to return and resume their important business, though the Council was, for a time, transferred to Bologna.

It has been asserted that Trent is particularly healthy, the air salubrious, and the weather always temperate; and frequently when a contagious

disease has been going through Germany, Trent has remained free. Certain it is, that the fever talked of at that time was of the most harmless nature, and scarcely any deaths occurred in consequence: yet, from its position, I cannot think Trent a place altogether likely to be very healthy, for it lies in a flat, and is surrounded by high hills which impede the free circulation of air.

The church of Santa Maria Maggiore is built on the site of the Council chamber, but there is no remains of the ancient building, nor any object of interest within the walls, except what may be derived from a picture representing the celebrated assembly, ill executed and dingy, and grudgingly shewn by the sacristan, who appeared more greedy for his fee than is usual with these personages, and more chary of his time.

The Dom or Cathedral of Trent is singular rather than fine, being unfinished and neglected. It is built of marble, and the façade next the great square presents some features of grandeur and even beauty. Within it is lofty and solemn, having a fine high altar, supported by immense pillars, and round the church are various tombs, adorned with figures in high relief, of a deep red marble, remarkable, but by no means in a good style of art. In fact I was much struck with the sudden contrast from the exquisite and elaborate carving and adornment of the ecclesiastical buildings in Italy. All here appeared to me mean, coarse, and rough, and the character

of every thing completely changed from refinement to rude simplicity. Nevertheless, there is a good deal of fine Tyrolean marble in the Dom, which looks rich and ponderous.

Lying on the floor in some of the chapels are bronze figures of knights and bishops, against which the foot strikes in walking; others are placed against the walls, without grace or symmetry. Doubtless these are but remnants of the gorgeous monuments to which they belonged, but nothing can exceed the bad taste with which they are arranged at present; and as the repairs in the Dom may now be considered complete, there is no hope that any change for the better will be accomplished. I ceased afterwards, as I proceeded on my journey in the Tyrol, to feel surprised or shocked at the questionable taste displayed in the public buildings of this country, but I could not cease to regret the grace and beauty of all I had left beyond the mountains, where

"Even the failings lean to *beauty's* side."

The town of Trent is dull and uninteresting in the extreme, but there are walks in its neighbourhood which possess many attractions. One pleasant, warm evening I walked across a handsome wooden bridge over the Adige, that charming river which recalled memories of

"Eccelsa, gloriosa, alma Verona!"

The mountains in front rise magnificently from the valley, which is filled up by the extensive town,

and the new road which leads into them offers beautiful views.

We passed on our way a very curious building, partly castle, partly church, which was formerly one of several strong-holds of the bishops in early times. A huge, strange-looking tower stands on a level with the river, and is now a portion of the old church of Santa Paulina. It was so crowded with country people that we found it impossible to penetrate into the interior, which is, however, fitted up merely for the service. At the door is a remarkable tomb, on which are bas-relief carvings of Saint Beato traversing a river on his cloak, which a miracle has endowed with the properties of a good boat; angels are holding it up at the four corners, and the saint seems to have managed his *trajet* admirably. Huge frescoes cover the outside walls, representing the giant St. Christopher crossing the river on foot, bearing on his shoulders the heavenly infant whose cries had excited his compassion, and through whose admonitions he forsook his former unholy life after the aquatic feat.

As the Adige is much given to overflow its bounds both here and elsewhere, there was, of course, at all periods much occasion for the intervention of saints and angels to rescue the country people from the ravages of this uncontrollable torrent, which seldom allows a year to pass without displaying its fatal powers of destruction, throughout the whole of its headlong course.

Along the new road to the mountains above Santa Paulina, it appears to be the mode of the *élite* of Trent to take their evening Sunday promenade, and I was much amused at the splendid dresses of the *lionnes*, and the singularity of that of the *lions* of the Tyrol. The fashions of Vienna, overtopping those of the Paris model, seem outdone at Trent in the amplitude of the petticoats of the ladies, and the brilliancy of the colours they wear: the gentlemen encourage a great growth of hair, and allow enormous curls to protrude on each side of the head, or thick ringlets to hang low down the back. Some prefer their tresses being puffed out like full bottomed wigs, but none wear short or straight hair.

The first of the handsome Tyrol peasant costumes I saw pleased my eye extremely. A beautiful rich lilac is in favour for the adornment of the nether man, a green waistcoat is worn over a scarlet one, and a dark jacket is faced with red: the short stockings do not reach to the bare knees, and the high crowned green beaver hat is always bound with gold cord, and has tassels depending, and generally a flower stuck in the band.

Nothing can be more theatrical and pretty than the men's dress, and the women's is occasionally so, though neither the round beaver, nor the high crowned hat can ever be becoming. It is singular to see in the Tyrol, so far removed from the Welsh mountains, the same head-dress worn by the women as at the foot of Cader Idris and Snowdon, but as

there is infinitely less beauty of feature here than in Wales, the ugliness of the costume is even more apparent.

We strolled about the town, and entered the large court yard of what had once been one of many fine palaces; this was the Palazzo Gollas, and must have been splendid in its day. The view of the mountains and river from the parapet wall of the court is splendid.

There are several other palaces, now of little consequence, but preserving much remains of former beautiful architecture.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CLOUDS AND ANGELS—BOTZEN—GERMAN DINNERS—VALLEY OF THE EISACK—KLAUSEN—BRIXEN—THE WAGGON—HOFER—PEASANTS—ARCADIA—WOLFENSTEIN—SPRICHENSTEIN AND REIFENSTEIN—MINER'S TOWN—MAGPIE PRIEST—BRENNER—GREISS—STEINACH—THE RIVALS—HOUSE DECORATION—NEW ROAD.

At early morning, after a boisterous, rainy night, we quitted Trent to proceed on our way towards Innspruck. The air was cool and fresh, and the sun fitful; every where the waters were out, submerging the meadows, and deluging the roads.

Delicate, white, fleecy clouds travelled amongst the mountain peaks, throwing garlands over their stern brows. These wreaths of clouds are exquisitely graceful in a hilly region, adorning the rugged scene, and softening the asperities. One expects in watching them to see pretty winged heads peep up from behind their soft curtains, like those groups which the immortal masters are fond of introducing into their pictures. We met droves of fine large strong cattle of a rich brown colour, strikingly contrasted with the exquisite silver grey and pink white of the same animals in Lombardy, which are peculiarly delicate in their forms, and small in their stature.

The torrent Avisio foams and swells beneath piles of rocks, and the picturesque castle of Salurn

on a pinnacle stands boldly forth, defying all attacks; though now a mere shell, it was once a most important post, and commanded the passage up the Adige.

Branching out from the valley of the Adige run numerous *thals*, all possessing beauties and attractions to the explorer, and after passing Neumarkt and its fine neighbouring church of St. Florian, seated amidst vines and willow avenues, the limestone rocks end, and the region of the porphyry mountains begins, introducing the traveller to the beautiful but unhealthy valley of the Eisack, a torrent river, which shares with all its neighbours the character for turbulence and mischief for which they are celebrated.

We rested for a time at Botzen or Bolzano, as it is sometimes called; for some remains yet linger of the musical language which I regretted to find was fading away by degrees as I advanced towards Germany. Language and person alike degenerate here; the fine Italian head, and flashing dark eye, are replaced by broad features and grey eyes, and though simple good humour takes the place of grace and beauty, the loss of the latter cannot but be sensibly felt, as every step carries the admirer away from the fascinating country of his preference.

The table d'hote at Botzen introduced me to preserved cherries and beef, and many incongruous dishes, as uneatable as unpronounceable. The immeasurable period taken for dinner was really

appalling, and I began to think we should not leave Botzen all day, if we persisted in awaiting some viands with which we could be satisfied.

Long before our German companions had reached through half their meal we were compelled to give up the trial, and betook ourselves to the usual task of sight-seeing, abandoning them to their serious occupation, of which they did not seem likely soon to tire.

Alas! at Botzen it appeared that I must take leave of the mellifluous sounds which had so pleased my ear, and when I listened to the guttural sputtering around me, I was startled by a suddenly-awakened fear that, perhaps, to an Italian ear, our own bold English might have no softer sound. Since poetical beauty and power depend on thought and not on language, the English and Germans are safe, but it must be confessed that the vehicle in which their fine imaginings are conveyed is woefully inferior in melody to that which gave utterance to the mind-musings of Dante and Petrarch.

There is little to detain the traveller in the town of Bolzano, which is for ever threatened with destruction by a tyrant mountain torrent, whose devastations are sometimes frightful. The tower of the Gothic Dom looks well as it rises in the valley of the Eisack, pointing

"its taper spire to Heaven;"

and beautiful are the well-trained vines on the road leading to the barren hills.

Hour after hour we continued mounting, and descending stupendous heights, from whence rose, higher still, strange-pointed rocks, piercing the skies, the *horns* of dolomite mountains. Sometimes huge masses peered over all, capped with snow, and shining in the gleaming sun. The rocks of porphyry for which the valley of the Eisack is renowned, rise purple and ruddy, bathed by the numerous contending torrents tributary to the old Eisack, that foam, and chafe, and roar, and send up their clouds of spray like fairy wreaths amongst the gigantic masses that impede their way. Here the colour of the waters reminded me of the beautiful aquamarine tint peculiar to the Pyrenees, but no where does that lovely hue reach such perfection as amongst the pine-covered heights of Bearn.

Every now and then we crossed these turbulent streams by covered wooden bridges of stupendous strength, built so solidly that they appeared to defy the power and malice of the mischievous water spirits who are never weary of destroying the works of man as well as those of nature.

In the midst of all this turmoil and barrenness occasional patches appear of vines, so luxuriant and beautiful that a new country seemed to rise around, as

> "Along our path fresh garlands
> Were hung from tree to tree."

After a wild gloomy pass, where the dark threatening rocks offered a formidable barrier to our advance, the valley would suddenly spread forth,

disclosing some peaceful hamlet sleeping amongst rich trees, with pretty cottages and comfortable houses with pointed tourelles and balconies filled with flowers.

We were several times accosted by begging students, who paused and asked assistance as they plodded on their way in scattered bands, in search of learning, which, perhaps, they expected to find in Padua or at Trent.

Some grim ruin looks down on the traveller from every commanding position: the walls of the castle of Deutschen extend far along the heights, and that above Klausen stands with threatening aspect menacing the whole valley. I was struck, and not very agreeably, with the taste prevalent in the Tyrol villages, of painting the church spires of a bright red; this, with the shining coloured tiles of the houses and their roofs edged with tin, has a most extraordinary effect, certainly not either elegant or graceful. Nothing can exceed the cleanliness of the houses and streets, and as I looked upon them I regretted that in beautiful Italy neatness forms no part of the inexpressible charm which lurks about her scenes.

Klausen is a picture of cleanliness and trim adornment; every house has a balcony, and most of them have small high tourelles running up at the corners, with little pointed and grated windows. The principal street is very narrow, and there appears scarcely room to pass between the buildings:

this construction, doubtless, belonged to the times of warfare, when it was prudent to afford as few facilities as possible for the passage of invaders.

On a precipice above the town stands a convent, on the site, as is supposed, of a temple of Isis; a tragical tale is told of a nun who cast herself from this rock on the occasion of the French invasion. The spot is grand and fine in the extreme.

The valley here is rich and fertile and the growth of the trees luxuriant, and, as we drove out of the fine old gateway of Klausen, the scene before us was animated and charming.

Murray, who is almost always correct and invariably useful, describes the inn at Brixen as "dear and uncivil." Whether the fear of his animadversions, which has in many places produced a salutary effect, has operated here I know not, but the 'Elephant' now deserves only his first comment of "clean and good," to which a traveller may safely add "cheap and very attentive."

This is a town full of nunneries, amongst them one for English ladies, but neither church or convents are worthy to detain any one long. A ruined castle on a height and a remarkably imposing monastery, which has all the effect of a castle, are without the town, and just where two valleys unite, and their rushing torrents hurry on to fall into the Eisack, rises a huge strong and extensive modern fortress, called Franzensfeste, erected by the Austrian government, in this very important pass. Its

granite walls are bristling with cannon, and it had a formidable aspect as we passed close beneath it, which no enemy would ever be able to do, so completely does it block up every entrance to the valley. Everywhere large crucifixes raise their gigantic forms by the road side, they are rudely and gaudily painted, and frequently have three figures, Christ and the two thieves, presenting an effect extremely disagreeable.

The morning we left Brixen was fresh and cold, with a bright cheerful sun, which threw its gleams between the red stems of the numerous fir-trees, and shone on the silver bark of the groups of graceful birch, by which the road was adorned. We entered a gloomy gorge, through which the angry Eisack still kept its way, green and foamy, and in furious mood: the bed is large and filled with rocks, and fearful must be its course in the black days of rainy winter, and in early spring, when the melted snows swell its tide.

The houses in the valley here assume a Swiss character, having timber roofs kept on by large stones.

Our driver, who seemed more stupid and blundering than most of his countrymen, who are by no means brilliant at any time, although the road was wide enough for several carriages, contrived, just as we were turning a corner of rock, to run foul of a huge thatched waggon with eight horses, neatly laden with some precious merchandise, and we had

nearly paid a visit to the exulting nymphs of the expectant Eisack, so rudely did we approach the monstrous vehicle, whose bristling straw sides crushed and crunched against us, bending every projection, and nearly twisting off one of our front lamps. We, however, escaped with the fright, and following the gorge, which was one of the scenes of those dreadful contentions between the illustrious heroes of the Tyrol, and their invading foes, we reached Mittewald, a curious pine built village, where pine torches are used for ordinary lights, in the most primitive fashion.

The gorge here becomes very narrow, the rocks fearfully perpendicular, and all around proves how fatal must have been the fire of the Tyrolese when directed against their enemies below, as they took their unerring aim from every natural parapet and loop hole, and headed by the undaunted Capuchin Harpinger, swept the French and Saxons from their native valley.

* "So comes the Po in flood time,
Upon the Celtic plain:
So comes the squall, blacker than night,
Upon the Adrian main.

So flies the spray of Adria,
When the black squall doth blow;
So corn-sheaves in the flood time,
Spin down the whirling Po."

* Macaulay.

'Here, where the gallant Hofer and his brave companion Spechbacher overwhelmed their foes,—here where the river's snowy foam was stained with crimson, now flourishes in the utmost luxuriance the wild rose, whose red and white starry blossoms are shed over the earth and the rocks where blood was shed for freedom by peasants whom necessity made warriors. Here the hedges were full of fragrant elder-flowers and gentle aspens shivered along the banks of the *Rio verde*. The contrast of wild and peaceful is here most remarkable; on one hand mighty rocks barren and gloomy, on the other rich fields of corn in the open vale, flowers and fruit trees, mixed with grey-roofed cottages and scarlet-roofed crucifixes.

All around is neatness and order, and here I first observed how gracefully the people of the Tyrol ornament their fields by enclosures of stakes, woven with wattles, in the most fantastic patterns, continually varying. They were mowing in the valley, and the bright costume of the peasants had the most Arcadian effect. The girls in their gay bodices, white full sleeves, and black mittens, the men in pointed hats adorned with roses and many-coloured vests, as if prepared for a ballet; the scene around forming the very perfection of pastoral beauty: verdure and foliage in the foreground and snowy mountains in the distance.

At a turn in the winding road I observed, below but standing on a high projecting rock and com-

manding the passage of the river, a fine shell of a castle, peculiarly striking and picturesque. This is the castle of Wolfenstein, once the key of the pass in old times. It has a much more interesting effect than most of these feudal remains in the Tyrol, for they are generally disfigured with modern roofs, and are filled in with common-place buildings, and are used as the residence of some official, or put to some purpose which destroys their character. Their position alone recommends them to the eye of taste, but Wolfenstein is a mere ivy-covered ruin, seated on a bold rock, and is as grand and mysterious as heart can wish. The Eisack here runs calmly on its winding way, at the foot of the rugged height which it crowns, and mountains, whose summits clothed with dark pines are lost in the clouds, hem it in on all sides.

At Mauls, which is not far distant, the Sterzinger Moos, an extensive morass, begins, and for several leagues covers the hollow bottom of a valley: here, in a dreary spot above, is placed a small chapel, raised in honour of the repulse given by the Tyrolese to the French, under Joubert in 1797, and in the gorge entered just beyond, struggles for life and death deformed the face of nature. Huge masses of rock were hurled from the mountains on the heads of the invaders, and many of these doubtless still lie in the grim defile as trophies, but time has covered them with moss and flowers, and they will tell no tales now.

Two menacing castles, one a ruin, the other fitted up as a residence, stand on opposite sides of the road, which winds on between gigantic mountains, towards the Brenner pass. Here are Sprechenstein, and Reifenstein, and formidable opponents must they once have been to a hostile traveller.

Sterzing is an old town, in which as much as possible of the tawdry taste in which the Tyrol abounds seems exhibited. The inhabitants are all rich, and the long chief street was built by those who had gained considerable wealth in the neighbouring mines, during the time of the working so long ago as the fifteenth century: the forms of the buildings are curious, they have pointed arcades and projecting windows, so detached as to look like little towers, heavy balconies adorn the fronts, and these, seen all down the street one above another along the irregular fronts, have a most singular aspect. Every window is often filled with flowers from the top of the house to the bottom, and very gay and pretty they look, but the painter has been unsparingly at work here: all the church-steeples are red and green, every house front is rose colour and yellow picked out with some glaring tint or other: frescoes of strange shapes and dazzling brightness cover the walls, and daubing reigns triumphant.

I never saw anything so ugly and glaring as this miner's town, where the importance of wealth without judgment is clearly developed.

We were now proceeding to the Brenner pass,

and continued ascending through forests of small pines, along a wild and fine height for several hours: frequent cataracts come rushing down from the highest points, and fall with thundering noise into the torrent beneath. Chapels with dome-shaped roofs, glittering with brass and tin, and flaming with red paint, rise up amongst the thick trees, and occasional neat villages occur throughout the route.

We met a party of pedestrians on their journey, in whose company was a priest, who wore a black robe, over a sort of white dressing gown, adorned with cord and tassels: his magpie costume had a most bizarre effect, and he seemed to be aware that he cut a strange figure, for he laughed consciously as we gazed at him.

At the summit of the pass, is the village of Brenner, lying amongst furious cataracts, which threaten to tear away the rocks, which have for ages submitted to their raging efforts unmoved. The post house is a sort of den, with many caves, the massive and singular architecture of which, impressed me with the idea of its having formed part of a convent in days of old, but I afterwards saw many inns constructed in the same dismal and extraordinary manner, and therefore suppose it is simply the taste of the country.

You enter a low door-way, and find yourself in a long, dark, low vaulted passage of great length, out of which numerous rooms open, which are large and gloomy. A tower staircase, perfectly dark,

conducts to an upper floor, where a similar dim dismal passage offers the same character, and the whole dwelling is altogether as uninviting as possible, suggesting the thought of robbers and midnight attacks.

The mill turned by a beautiful cascade close to the post house, is a charming object, and the little church of Brenner is particularly picturesque, with its graceful circular windows three and three together.

After this we began to descend slowly, and reached the singularly pretty village of Greiss, painted rose-colour and apple green, houses and church, posts and rails, but so delicately clean and neat that it was impossible to quarrel with the good people whose passion for paint carries them such extraordinary lengths. All round this village hay-making was going on, and the fields were brilliant with flowers of every hue, as if Nature herself had been seduced to follow the favourite Tyrolean custom of colouring everything with the brightest tints.

At Steinach we paused for an hour or two, and endeavoured to discover at which hotel Hofer had slept on the eve of the battle of Berg Isel. At the post house where we stopped the landlady assured me that we were in the very chamber once occupied by the Tyrolean hero, and produced little pictures in metal representing him at full length, which travellers never fail to carry off. But the rival inn, the Steinbock, claims the honour of having sheltered the saviour of his country; and when we visited its

owner, were so circumstantially assured by an eloquent young man, who spoke very good Italian, that his father knew the hero well, and that, on that very spot did he lodge, that it was impossible to believe any asseverations uttered in German by our indignant hostess. We left the Neri and Bianchi to settle the ever-recurring quarrel, and bought a picture of Hofer of each, quite satisfied that, having seen both rooms, sat in both chairs, and leaned on both tables, we could not have missed the true relics.

Although the eyes of my mind and body were alike disgusted at the display of tawdry daubing plaistered on every house in Steinach, I found myself obliged to be as silent as I could in my regrets for the many-hued marbles of Italy, which, filling those gorgeous churches to the roof, make every dome a blaze of rainbow light, for I discovered my distaste to paint was by no means shared by others, nor did I fail to find often more enthusiasm expressed for the rudely imitated architecture *designed* on the walls of the houses in the Tyrol than for the real glories which the same travellers had passed coldly by at Milan, Verona, or Venice.

Certain it is, that the enormous wooden houses, covered with shapes and forms of things which are intended to look imposing, are very extraordinary, and have a kind of merit from their ingenuity. The fault is in visiting Italy before the Tyrol, as it is difficult to be even amused with bad imitations after exquisite originals.

In the Tyrol nothing is carved or cut—all is painted. Corinthian pillars, friezes, capitals, medallions, string courses, are all in semblance, and every coloured marble is imitated in the most ambitious manner. A house exactly opposite our chamber at the post was one of the most elaborate specimens of this ingenious absurdity, and the details of its adornments appeared to have no end.

This seems to be no new fashion, although the towns are all, at this time, freshly renewed by their wealthy inhabitants, for on some obscure old houses, in bye-streets, gorgons of every colour are to be seen. Hofer and his companions frown grimly in green and scarlet on the walls, and all perspective is outraged from the top floor to the bottom.

The descent of the Brenner is very long, gradual, and extremely fine: it is the lowest pass over the main chain of the Alps, and vegetation is no where checked by the snows, which only rest on the highest peaks, and do not come near the carriage road, which has been repaired very lately, and a readier way made over numerous ravines of stupendous depth, which are now spanned by solid bridges of masonry of immense strength. It is extraordinary to find oneself hovering over these precipices with such perfect security: high and firm parapets protecting the road on each side, which now avoids all angles and goes straight on, disdaining to turn aside for any impediment. Workmen were still busily employed in the extensive works, and the state of that

part of the road which their labours had not reached proved the necessity of such active reform: not less than five hundred men are daily employed in hewing the rocks, and constructing the defences of this magnificent pass, which, being so easy, is likely to supersede those higher, and more dangerous, leading into Italy.

We at length came in sight of Berg Isel, where the memory of the patriot Hofer is enshrined, and far beneath, filling up a wide valley, but closely hemmed in with towering mountains, capped with snow, lay shining in the sun the singular and splendid-looking city of Innspruck.

CHAPTER XXV.

INNSPRUCK—SPACE—PINK AND YELLOW CHURCHES—THE NEUSTADT—THE GOLDEN SUN—CONTRAST TO ITALY—SIROCCO—OLD TOWN—PUBLIC WALK—GOOD PEOPLE—KINDNESS—THE NIGHTINGALE—THE GOOD NEIGHBOUR—THE BIRD OF INNSPRUCK—ANCIENT AND MODERN LOVERS—PHILIPPINA—TOMB OF MAXIMILIAN—BRONZE CROWD—SILVER CHAPEL—TOMB OF HOFER AND THE TYROLESE HEROES—GOLDENE DACH.

NOTHING can be more imposing than the first view of this imperial town, renowned by the name of Maximilian the Great, that eccentric hero of many fights, whose wonderful monument attracts all Europe to these walls.

Space is the general characteristic of the city; the view takes in an extensive range of lofty buildings, of size capable of accommodating the giants of the Neibelungenlied, some of whom are said to have founded the abbey which rises above the buildings in Wilten, at the foot of Berg Isel.

So wide apart seem the streets, so scattered appears the town, that one would rather fancy a city of Baths was approached than the capital of the Tyrol. Every thing about Innspruck is gigantic, and it is easy to imagine the effect which must have been produced by the loyal compliment on one occasion paid to the Emperor, of writing his

name *in bonfires* on the mountains which surround the town.

The broad and full river Inn runs past the city, and is crossed by a fine wooden bridge: solemn and grand it rushes and foams along, murmuring and chafing as it meets the Sill, which arrives from the snowy heights of Tyrol to its encounter.

As we wound round and round the mountain road, which was bringing us nearer to Innspruck, the aspect of its gigantic churches struck me with amazement. There was little to admire but their extreme vastness, their high towers and round domes rising in stupendous proportions: but I could scarcely believe that I was not deceived by the sun, when I observed that these great masses of building were all painted of a delicate pink, and a pale yellow. As we passed them close, I found that it was too true, and I no longer wondered at the bad taste of the mountaineers in every village through which I had passed, as the capital sets such an example. The architecture is as faulty as the decoration: and on a near approach, all is ambitious and tawdry, flaring, glaring, and distressing to the sight.

We entered the city, from a long painted suburb, as clean, as wide, and as formal as possible, beneath an enormous triumphal arch, chiefly remarkable for its great size, and the profusion of its decorations: it has, however, an imposing effect in spite of its coarseness and want of grace.

We drove into the Neustadt, which is immensely wide and long, and closed by crowding mountains fleckered with snow, which seem to dip into the street. On each side of the way rise large houses full of balconies, profusely decorated with stucco; pillars and friezes, with wreaths, and scrolls, and porticos, painted and fretted from top to bottom in the most bewildering manner. About half way down the street, in the centre, stands a high red column, with little flaring gilt angels hovering round, and clinging to it; statues surround its base, and the statue of a saint surmounts it. The capital is profusely gilt, and the saint's head is encircled by a golden glory. Two huge towers with flaming red and gilded domes, rise up above the rest of the buildings of the street, and the bright green sun-blinds against the pink and yellow houses, complete the tawdry effect of the enormous whole.

The projecting sign of a golden sun dangled before a very large hotel, and this we found was to be our resting place during the period of our stay at Innspruck.

My first impression was that what I beheld was coarse and barbarous, and the contrast presented to the interesting but slovenly towns of Italy, was by no means pleasing to my mind. There all is rich in poetry and art, all has to be sought for, and when found, is hailed with enthusiasm: here all is wealth and vulgar display, and all is on the surface. It was necessary to think of Hofer and the patriot

virtues, which have raised a peasant to the rank of an Emperor, before I could feel in good humour with the gigantic clumsiness of this pride of the Tyrol.

The heat was now intense, and the unclouded sun cast down its burning rays on the broad Neustadt, flaring on the gold and red pillars, and on the coloured and shining church cupolas. It was impossible to linger for a moment in the street, so suffocating was the air, and so fierce the glowing rays. It seemed as if Innspruck was a furnace shut in by a belt of fiery hills, whose snows mocked the sufferer. When the fury of day had subsided, and the grey of evening came, I hoped for some breeze from the mountains to refresh the pent up air, but it came not; the Sirocco's breath alone sighed malignantly, the wide pavement scorched the feet, and vile odours rose from the open gateways, proclaiming the fact of the apparent cleanliness, being, in some degree at least, deceptive.

I hastened to the antique part of the town, for our quarter was all new, but found nothing that called for admiration or interest in the low, murky, rudely carved arcades and dark small shops beneath them. These led, however, to the massive wooden bridge over the Inn, and that once reached, nothing can be more splendid than the sight which bursts upon the eye, on either hand. Here runs the magnificent river into whose waves the huge mountains dip their feet: far away into the distance their purple shadows melt in graceful lines and bold projections;

and even the coarse buildings on the banks are invested with a rude beauty suitable to the scene.

Beside the river extend meadows and gardens, and here is a pretty public walk, where the fashionables of Innspruck make repair every evening to listen to the very fine Jäger band, and to sit beneath trees at wooden tables, smoking and drinking beer.

I was about to enter unceremoniously, when I was stopped by a female guardian of this Paradise, and requested to pay a few *kreutzers*, by virtue of which I was admitted: but the fumes of beer and tobacco so completely overpowered that of the flowers in the pretty parterres, that I hurried from the fashionable end towards the river's banks, where the walks are well laid out. Far along the shore, the fields and hills are dotted with white villas, the residences of the rich inhabitants of Innspruck, and I was told that several English families had long been domiciliated there.

The excursions round the city and the neighbouring country are said to be beautiful and highly interesting; though I cannot but fancy the scenery must be of rather a monotonous character, to judge by the long journey I had just taken amongst these mountains.

The fir-trees in this garden are remarkably large and lofty; I had not seen any so fine throughout the Tyrol.

I shocked the civil woman who had taken my

kreutzers, by quitting the garden before the music was over, as she seemed to fear I had not had enough for my money, but she comforted herself with a soliloquised assurance that I should return presently, forcing a ticket on me to facilitate the intention.

Honesty and good nature appear to me to take the place of beauty and grace in this region, for nothing can exceed the civil attention paid by all ranks to strangers. I met with one remarkable instance, which I think could scarcely occur elsewhere.

A lady of our party was taken suddenly ill with fever occasioned by the intense heat, and the evil Sirocco which continued to blow; she was obliged to send for a medical man, who attended her with great kindness, and whose comic attempts at English and French might almost have cured a patient disposed to be amused. At night, when, by means of his prescriptions, she hoped to be able to enjoy some sleep, scarcely had the continued bustle in the street subsided, than the voice of a nightingale in a cage on the opposite side of the way made itself heard, at first softly and melodiously, and then, as the stillness increased, loudly and clearly, till, finding itself alone in its melody, and the hour sacred to its song having arrived, it poured forth one uninterrupted strain of sweet shrill sounds till the star of morning warned the unwearied minstrel that it was time to give over.

As it was impossible to bear a window closed, in

consequence of the heat, these sounds entered every avenue of our suite of rooms and re-echoed through them, for the bird "who is all voice" seemed to exert itself to the utmost for our behoof. To me it was delightful, and I lay listening with the utmost pleasure to these energetic warblings, falling asleep and being waked again every five minutes, thinking

"the full choir of heaven was near."

Not so, however, with the invalid in the next chamber: the melody was only noise in her ears, and her feverish distress and impatience increased with every note. She had no sleep that night, and was in despair in the morning.

The next night the same triumphant lays were renewed, and, this time, I had no enjoyment in them, knowing the effect they would produce on my neighbour.

When the doctor appeared he was told of the nightingale nuisance, and expressed much regret that his patient should have been so much disturbed. Nothing was said, but when night again came on, we expected to be still annoyed, and made up our minds to endure the melodious infliction as we might. All, however, was silence: not a note sounded throughout the night; but once I thought I heard a faint, low, distant thrill, as if no chain or dungeon could imprison that voice.

We found that a petition had been sent to our opposite neighbour, stating the case, and, without a moment's hesitation, the favourite had been carried

away to another dwelling, at some distance, as there was no other way of silencing the petted minstrel, who could not be brought to comprehend the necessity of ceasing his hundred songs.

I could not help apostrophising the "hidden voice," in spite of the annoyance its lays were to others.

THE NIGHTINGALE OF INNSPRUCK.

Thou—a captive—can'st thou sing?
Can'st thou not forget the strain,
Warbled 'midst sweet scenes of spring,
Never to be thine again?

Often in the silent night,
Waving boughs have heard thy lay,
Where the firefly's starry light
Make the banks of Gader gay.

Often where the silkworm throws
Fairy webs from tree to tree,
Thou hast, shrouded in the boughs,
Carol'd long and loud and free.

Often by the high cascade,
Where swift Eisack springs to life,
And the aspen's quivering shade
Trembles at the waters' strife:

And where soft Bolzano lies,
Shrined in rich pomegranate bowers,
Where the restless Adige hies,
Towards Verona's circling towers;

Where the porphyry mountains raise
Crimson peaks the pines above,
Thou hast sung those tender lays,
Saint Verena's echoes love.

Thou hast sung amidst those isles,
Gems upon the azure sea,
Where the syren Venice smiles,
Fit abode for love and thee!

Ofttimes where the olive grey
Waves its faint leaves o'er the vine,
Lovers ask what minstrel's lay
Can compare with notes like thine?

And beside the moonlit lake,
Where fair Como lies in light,
Somariva's perfumed brake
Trembled to thy sighs all night.

But the moon looks sadly now,
While thy captive numbers fall,
O'er the Tyrol's rugged brow,
Startled at thy pensive call.

'Tis, as Hofer's spirit woke,—
He whose rifle freed the vales,
And in wailing accents spoke,
Telling old, remembered tales

Of the peasant hero's fate,
Brief success and ceaseless fame,—
England's succour, all too late!—
France's vengeance,* and her shame.

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* "At the end of 1810, Andrew Hofer retired, with all his family, to a poor hut amongst the hills and amidst the deepest snows, grieving for his country, but tranquil as to his own fate.

Sing no more!—a mournful close
Rings in each shrill note to me,
Who have lost, for Innspruck's snows,
Como's lake—Venezia's sea!

The old romance of this part of the world of a prince who married a citizen's daughter, is revived in the present day. Duke John of Austria some years since fell in love with a fair damsel of the Tyrol valleys, whose father had some farms, and was a post-master: he married her, and has a son, now a fine young man; they live in a pretty country-house near Innspruck, a secluded happy life free from ambition or state. The prince is occasionally called to Court, where his wife cannot be received, but he appears

Napoleon, however, thirsted for his blood. He was accordingly sought after with the utmost diligence, till he was at last traced to his secret retreat. The imperial soldiers knocked at his cottage door on the 27th of January. Hofer opened it, and seeing the surrounding force, said, simply, with unmoved composure, "I am Andrew Hofer! I am in the power of France; do with me as you will, but spare my wife and children; they are innocent, and not answerable for my actions." With these words he gave himself up to the soldiers. . . . Conducted to Bolzano, his wife and one son, yet in his boyhood, accompanied him—the last separation was impending over them. The boy was left at Bolzano, the mother was sent to Passeira to take charge of three other children still in infancy, whose father, now a prisoner, was soon to suffer death.

"Both in the German and Italian Tyrol, the afflicted populace ran in crowds wherever Hofer passed in bonds, weeping, lamenting, and blessing him. At Mantua the balls of the French soldiers pierced his heart."—Botta's *History of Italy*.

to have no regrets about the past. He is often seen in Innspruck, in a little low open carriage, sitting by the side of the driver: he is extremely beloved and respected, and his presence is hailed in the city with delight. The modern Philippina is not remarkable for beauty, but very amiable.

Although Philippina Welser was said to be the most beautiful woman of her time, there is nothing in her tomb in the Cathedral to prove the assertion. Her effigies lie on her monument, and represent a very ordinary German face and figure: the story of her fortunes is thus told.

She was the daughter of a citizen of Augsburg, and her beauty and virtues captivated Ferdinand the young Archduke, who made her his wife. The Emperor Ferdinand his father, indignant at his conduct, would not forgive his son, nor see the beautiful cause of his weakness. They had been married eight years when Philippina, resolved to gain her point, contrived to introduce herself into the presence of her awful father-in-law. The sight of her beauty, her tears and eloquence so moved him that he could no longer refuse his forgiveness: he acknowledged her as his son's wife, and conferred the title of Margrave on both her sons.

Such an example ought not to have been lost on the present Emperor, since that of the imprudent Archduke was so closely followed by Duke John, and since, it seems, that the post-master's daughter, is as worthy of his clemency and her husband's love.

The chief object of interest at Innspruck is the tomb of Maximilian I., in the Hof Kirche. The Emperor is, after all the pains he took to erect it in his life-time, not buried here, for it was not finished when he died.

When I first entered the church my impression was that a crowd of persons had assembled to look at the tomb, but, on a near approach, I found that I was singularly mistaken, for all the figures I had taken for curious gazers, were knights and ladies in bronze to the number of twenty-eight. There they stand in rows on each side of the aisles, surrounding the large sarcophagus in the centre of the church, which is dedicated to the memory of Maximilian.

Every one of the colossal statues is admirably cast: the robes of the ladies are richly embroidered and elaborately decorated, presenting the most curious and admirable costumes with the most exquisite correctness, the knights are incased in elaborately carved and ornamented armour, covered with patterns such as Cellini describes as used in damascening:—

"In Italy there is a variety of tastes, and we cut foliages in many different forms. The Lombards make the most beautiful wreaths representing ivy leaves, and others of the same sort, with agreeable twinings highly pleasing to the eye."

I returned many times to this goodly company, amongst whom I could never fancy I was alone, although on one occasion I remained more than an

hour by myself sketching the figure of Joanna of Castile. There is something quite extraordinary in being the only mortal of this wonderful crowd of worthies, whose attitudes are so animated, that they seem in truth to live and breathe around. Singular is the society thus brought together, for it embraces many ages. King Arthur of Britain, stands bold and grand, with Rudolph of Hapsburg, and the renowned Dukes of Burgundy, Styria and the Tyrol. The kings of the Ostrogoths, of France and Spain, are looking on, Leopolds, Alberts, Maximilians and Fredericks are side by side, with haughty princesses of Austria, Aragon and Portugal, and their swords seem to clank and their robes to rustle in the crowd, as they press forward to look upon the kneeling Emperor who surmounts his marble tomb.

The tomb itself requires a lengthened period to examine its wonderfully beautiful details: to read the pictured history in its pannels, to follow the minute events exhibited in its singular carvings. There are four and twenty marble chapters in this romance, and each is as elaborately dwelt on, as if the pen of the author of the Grand Cyrus had been employed on the occasion instead of the graver of Collin of Mechlin. Some of these compartments are of surprising truth and executed with extraordinary grace. They represent important circumstances in the life of Maximilian, such as his marriage with the heiress of Burgundy,—the Capture of Arras,—the battle with the Venetians at Calliano,—the

marriage of Maximilian's son with the daughter of Ferdinand of Castile,—the re-establishment of the Sforza at Milan,—the battle of Guinegatte, in which our Henry VIII. figures, and many other scenes of equal interest.

As the stranger is allowed to go quite close to the tomb all the details are easily followed, and the minutest inspection is rewarded, for nothing can be more exquisite than the workmanship, or more graceful than the designs of this remarkable monument.

In the silver chapel are the tombs of the Archduke Ferdinand and his Philippina, but neither of them are particularly good; there are, however, on the former, some more bas-reliefs of Collin extremely beautiful. In this chapel are some small, curious, and well executed figures in bronze, of royal and noble saints, amongst them *Saint* Richard of England.

After the Emperor's tomb, the most interesting monument in the church is that of the hero Hofer. His body was brought from Mantua, where the liberty-loving French had shot the champion of his country, and here a marble tomb rewarded his exertions in the great cause. Opposite is another, raised to the memory of the Tyrolese who fell under his banner.

The picture of Hofer, and his figure, carved in horn and wood, and cast in metal, are to be found in every shop in Innspruck. He is the William Tell of the Tyrol, but as his heroic deeds are recent, there

is less obscurity and uncertainty respecting them. Unfortunately his appearance is clumsy and unintellectual, and the native artists do not contrive to add any grace to their representations of either the chief or any of the other Tyrol heroes, all of whom are coarse, common-looking peasants. The thought of his virtues is therefore the most agreeable memento which a stranger can carry away.

All the little *objets* carved in wood and chamois horn, sold at the mean little shops at Innspruck are paltry and worthless, and very inferior to those fabricated in Switzerland. In the public museum, where there is a collection of the works of native artists, in various lines, I was surprised to see how extremely rude the articles were which I had heard vaunted. As for the pictures, nothing can be conceived so bad—so utterly without promise, and in such fearfully bad taste—copies as well as originals. There is scarcely any thing in the museum affording a moment's interest to any but the natives of the Tyrol, who have probably never seen any wonders beyond their mountains. Efforts however are being made, apparently, to give the people opportunities of improvement; and in the course of a few years, no doubt, a better taste will prevail, and knowledge will follow. There is a University, established since 1826, and much money is devoted to the instruction of students.

The palace is more like a penitentiary, and is entirely unworthy of notice, nor is there much in the

town to detain the antiquarian or lover of the picturesque. One curious house still stands, and is always kept up as a relic of the olden time, when Frederic of the Empty Purse, to prove that he was ill named, spent thirty thousand ducats in building this place and covering the roof with gilt copper. A projecting window, with a shining roof, is conspicuous in front of the Fürstenburg, once the residence of the Tyrolean Counts, and this is called the Goldene Dach.

CHAPTER XXVI.

MAXIMILIAN THE EMPEROR—POCO DANARI—SIEGE OF MILAN —THE POPE AND SAINT—BORRI—JOHN FREDERICK THE MAGNANIMOUS—COOLNESS—LUCAS CRANACH—NOBLE ARTIST —RETURN—READY WIT.

Of all the singular princes of his house or his time Maximilian the Emperor, whose memory pervades every scene in the Tyrol, was the most remarkable. He was an actor in all the notable events of the period at which he lived. He was born in 1459, and died in 1519, and throughout his life was a conspicuous figure in the history of the age.

His first wife was Mary, the heiress of Burgundy, who brought him immense possessions in France and Flanders, which caused him constant contentions with their sovereigns, all of whom, by turns, were his friends and his enemies. His second wife, whom he married at Innspruck with great pomp, was a much inferior personage, whose large dower tempted him, but whose connexion involved him in innumerable difficulties. She was the niece of the usurper Ludovico il Moro of Milán, and in assisting her family's claims Maximilian exposed himself to the enmity of all Europe. The Turk and the Venetian were equally his foes, and he attacked all, as his humour, rather than his policy directed him; shifting his friends as he pleased: now on good terms

with Henry VIII. of England, and serving for pay in his armies, now siding with his enemies for a time; now the ally, anon the opposer of France and the Pope; he bustled through the scene always in arms, and always in a state of turbulence, like his native torrent streams.

The character of Maximilian was a singular mixture of strength and weakness. He was daring and adventurous, but neither cruel nor wicked—fond of entering into turmoils, but wanting resolution to persevere in any career he had chosen. With little principle and less stability, he was easily induced to lend his aid to great designs, and frequently allowed himself to become the dupe of persons more far-seeing than his limited talents allowed him to be.

His love of money was excessive, and his extravagance great. He was always needy, and always open to bribery, and was nicknamed *Massimiliano poco danari.* His successes or defeats were looked upon with equal ridicule by his contemporaries, and his want of dignity was remarkable in most of the transactions of his life. Many curious anecdotes are told of him, amongst others of his abandonment of the siege of Milan.

After Milan had acknowledged the sway of Francis the First, and was left by him under the government of the Constable of Bourbon, a new plot was conceived by the restless spirit of the Cardinal of Sion, a man of peace, but whose sole desire seemed to be the fomenting of war, to restore, such

was the pretext, Francisco Sforza to his possessions. The Emperor Maximilian, who appears at that time, to have been always ready to undertake a quarrel, and make himself a jest, accepted the invitation sent him to assist in gaining Milan from France. He collected his troops round him, and engaged a numerous band of Swiss mercenaries, who longed to wipe out the stain which had fallen on them by the conquests of the King of France, and sat down before Milan, which he believed would prove an easy prey.

The hot-headed Emperor was loud in his denunciations against the Milanese, and vowed that he would raze the city to its foundations and sow its site with salt, unless it was immediately yielded to him. Meanwhile he expected supplies from the King of England to pay the Swiss, but those not arriving, the troops began to murmur, and he was seized with a panic, recollecting that he had placed himself almost in the same position as that of Ludovico il Moro, whom the Swiss betrayed to France. Thinking no time was to be lost, he dispatched the Cardinal of Sion with all the money he had to the discontented soldiers, and giving out that he was going to Trent, in order to receive more on their account, the magnanimous chief set off in the night with two hundred horse, leaving his army to do as well as they might without a leader. Before he could be pursued he was out of reach and in his own dominions. The enraged soldiers were, of

course, obliged to retire, and this strange siege of Milan was raised.

So extraordinary were his actions, both on this and many other occasions, that it has been thought his intellects could not be altogether sound. His hatred of the French, which was invincible, led him into the most singular errors, and it was want of money alone which caused him to forego his wish to annoy them.

His opposition to the power of the secret tribunals in Germany is most honourable to him, and he perseveringly and with great energy and fortunately with success, laboured to extirpate their fatal power, following in this the good example of his father.

He was fond of the arts, as the employment he gave to Albert Durer and other artists proves, and he is said to have been a poet, though the vehicle he chose for his effusions was not the most graceful, for it was in *Dutch verse* that he commemorated some of the events of his life, while Hans Burgmair executed designs in wood of the events he sang, under his own direction.

At one time he hoped not only to become Pope, but to be made *a saint*, for so he expresses himself in a whimsical letter to his daughter, whose interest on the occasion he solicits in inimitably bad French.

An interesting work appeared in 1830 in Germany by Count Auersperg, under the name of Anastasius Grün, called "The Last of the Knights,"*

* Der letzte Ritter.

which is, in fact, a poetical history of Maximilian. The story of his adventures is told in a series of ballads of great beauty and power. The poet invests his hero with all the necessary virtues and merits which are calculated to interest the reader, and, at this distance of time, it is impossible to say how well he may have deserved the praise thus bestowed on him. The Germans speak of the great Max as "the real link between the frank, pleasant middle ages, and the newer, more secret and more prudently-calculating period, representing in himself the struggle of 'The Old,' in which he was brought up, with 'The New,' which, by observation and reflection, he had made his own—a knight of the older, a soldier of the later times."

During his lifetime two works appeared purporting to be either written by himself or under his supervision. One, in prose, was called Der Weisskunig. The Emperor's secretary, Marx Treitzsauerwein, was the editor. The poetical history was called Theurdank, and recounts his love passages in the wooing of his bride, the heiress of Burgundy; another secretary, Melchior Pfinzing, arranged it for the reading world, and this is the work already alluded to as being illustrated with wood-cuts; it must be a most interesting relic, worthy of the attention of the antiquary: the date of the embellishments is 1517, when it was published at Nuremberg.

Count Auersperg's poem begins with a scene in a

carpenter's shop close to the castle of Neustadt, who is called upon to make a cradle for the new-born babe of the Empress Leonora; the same carpenter, half a century afterwards, makes the coffin of that child, who is no other than Maximilian.

Amongst the remarkable personages that figured at Innspruck, few are more so than that half quack, half madman, il Cavaglieri Borri, who in the middle of the 17th century, made much noise in the world by his absurdities. He was the son of an able physician of Milan, who left him some property, which he considerably improved by cunning and good luck. The mania of the period for the discovery of the philosopher's stone, was the cause of his success, and he made as many dupes as most of those who possessed a knowledge of the great secret. A contemporary writer thus names him, when he was living at Amsterdam: "He, whom I am going to describe to you, is a tall black man, pretty well shaped; he wears good clothes, and spends pretty high, though not so much as is imagined, for eight or ten thousand livres will go a great way in Amsterdam. But a house of fifteen thousand crowns bought in a good place, five or six footmen, a suit after the French fashion, now and then a collation to the ladies, the refusing money in some cases, five or six rix-dollars distributed to the poor in proper time and place, arrogant words and such like acts, made some credulous persons, or some who could have wished it had been true, say that he gave hand-

fulls of diamonds, that he had found the philosopher's stone, and that he had the Universal medicine. He had heard say that physicians were suspected of not believing enough, and therefore he pretended to believe more than is required, and began to say that the Virgin Mary was a fourth person of the Divinity." For this he was attacked by the Inquisition, and sentenced to be burnt for non-appearance.

At Innspruck he made his first dupe of the Archduke, whose chemical studies he directed. He gave himself out for a Prophet, pretended to have had revelations from Heaven, to possess the power of living safely with, and ministering to persons infected with the plague, and successfully got through his boast on one occasion at Naples.

"I shall," he exclaims, at the beginning of his career, "quickly finish my chemical labours by the happy production of the philosopher's stone, and by that means I shall have gold for all my necessities in reforming the world; I am sure of the assistance of angels, and particularly of that of Michael the archangel. When I began to walk in the spiritual life, I had a vision in the night, attended by an angelical voice, which assured me that I should become a prophet. The sign that was given me for it, was a palm that seemed to me surrounded by the light of Paradise."

He proclaimed that St. Michael had taken possession of his heart, and that a host of angels revealed

to him the secrets of Heaven, and what passed in the conclave of Alexander VII.

He had projected, when he found himself sufficiently strong for the purpose, assembling the people in the great square at Milan, and there representing to them the abuses of the church, exciting them to liberty, and proposing himself as their captain and leader, but his design was discovered, and he was forced to fly.

Queen Christina of Sweden protected him, and was weak enough to spend both time and money on the great pursuit. One monarch after another encouraged his arts and listened to his ravings, for the belief in this chimera was so powerful, that it required centuries of defeat to convince persons of its fallacy. At length the Inquisition claimed him, and he was condemned to perpetual imprisonment, but his services as physician being required to cure a great man, his captivity was ameliorated: he died at last at the age of seventy-nine, in the castle of St. Angelo, in 1695, after a tolerably successful career of cheating.

He asserted that no event of importance ever occurred to him without the previous appearance of "a clear large star" which he saw, although his eyes were shut. That he was a skilful physician there is no more doubt, than that he was a curious charlatan, but the bigotry and ignorance of those he had to deal with, is as much to blame for his actions as himself.

At Innspruck was confined for five years the Elector of Saxony, who was called John Frederick the Magnanimous, the zealous friend and supporter of the Protestant cause, who was placed under the ban of the empire by Charles V. and had to sustain a war, which deprived him of his liberty and his dominions, in consequence of his steady adherence to the reformed doctrines. There are many circumstances of a romantic nature connected with his history, which add to the interest one feels in regarding his figure in one of the fine relievos on the tomb of the Archduke Ferdinand, in the church of the Franciscans in Innspruck.

It is related that he was marked from his birth with a golden cross on his back, which, when the priest who baptized him observed, he remarked, as he looked mournfully on the infant: "A great and heavy cross, poor child, wilt thou have to bear during this mortal life." A prediction which was in his after destiny fulfilled.

He was patient in his adversities, and his title of Magnanimous seems justly given: after the fatal battle of Mühlberg in 1547, where he was defeated, and made prisoner, he was sentenced by the Emperor to be beheaded, and a scaffold was actually erected on the field of battle for the purpose. The Elector was engaged with a fellow-captive, Ernest of Lüneberg, in a game of chess, when the decree, which had been resolved on, was announced to him. He neither trembled nor changed colour at hearing

the severe truth, but replied that he trusted more in the Emperor's clemency than to expect death, but if he had been deceived, he begged to be assured at once that his hopes were vain, that he might make arrangements in favour of his wife and children.

"Let us, however," said he, calmly to his companion, "finish our game."

This cool contempt for death, whether real or assumed, had so great an effect on the Emperor, that he was induced to listen to the entreaties of friends, and grant him his life. This was, nevertheless, offered him on condition of his acceding to the decisions of the Emperor and the council of Trent in regard to religion.

John Frederick stoutly refused to agree to this, declaring that nothing should prevent his adhering stedfastly to the confession delivered at Augsburg by his father himself and other princes, and he preferred losing all rather than being separated from the word of God.

The Emperor overcome by his firmness gave up insisting on those conditions, and contented himself with depriving the Elector of his dignity and dominions, which he conferred on his cousin Duke Maurice of Meissen.*

* Maurice of Saxony, at this time a great friend of the Emperor Charles V., became afterwards, from his exactions, his avowed enemy. He was a brave and able general, and on commencing hostilities in 1552, such was the rapidity of his move-

The captive prince was taken in triumph to Augsburg, and compelled to be witness to the ceremonies of Maurice's investiture with his possessions. He bore all with the utmost equanimity, exclaiming, as he heard the people's shouts: "Heaven grant that they who so rejoice in my downfall, may find my successor govern so well that they may have no need of me or mine."

While a prisoner at Innspruck, he formed the plan of a famous seminary, the university of Jena, which his sons afterwards completed. A faithful companion of his captivity, and a most devoted friend, was Lucas Cranach the great painter, a man distinguished not only for his talents as an artist, but his eminent virtues. The liberation of the Elector, is said, in a great measure, to have been owing to his attachment and zeal, for on one occasion the Emperor, who loved to see him paint, was watching the progress of one of his pictures, and remembering that, when a child, he had sat to the artist, asked him how old he was when the portrait was executed. Cranach replied, that the Emperor was then eight years of age. Charles, in a fit of good humour, desired him to ask some favour of him, and he would not fail to grant it.

The generous painter, thoughtless of his own

ments that he had nearly surprised Charles at Innspruck. It is intimated by historians that he might have taken him prisoner if he pleased, and on being asked why he did not, replied that 'he had no cage fit for so magnificent a bird'

advantage, immediately threw himself at the Emperor's feet, and entreated the release of his sovereign. Charles, struck with his noble spirit, exclaimed, as he turned to his attendants,—"The Saxon is the happiest of Princes—he has at least one true friend."

Not long after this the Emperor consented to meet the wishes of several princes, in favour of his captive, and in 1552 John Frederick was restored to liberty. He attended Charles V. to Augsburg, and from thence hastened to Weimar, where he was received with affectionate delight by his subjects. At the entrance of the town he was met by a troop of boys and young girls with flowing hair, wearing garlands of rue, and singing *Te Deum*. At Coburg he was met by his beloved wife Sybilla who fainted in his arms when she rushed forward to meet him.

The next year that tender companion, whom he so much rejoiced to rejoin, was taken from him by death, and when he gave directions respecting her tomb in the church of Weimar, he said to his secretary: "Tell the masons to leave a place for me by my wife, for I shall soon follow, and be laid beside her."

Scarcely had ten days elapsed before his melancholy prediction was fulfilled, and in his fifty-first year John Frederick died.

He was as remarkable for his strength of body as of mind: and incredible stories were told by the Spanish soldiers of Charles Vth's army, of his gigan-

tic size. They asserted that a man might stand up in one of his boots, which though not strictly true, goes near to be proved, for at Gotha a boot of his is shewn, which is certainly large enough to contain a tall child.

That he had a quick talent at repartee, appears by the following anecdote. He had chosen for his motto the words :—

Verbum Domine manet in Aeternum.

The initials of this sentence were embroidered on the sleeves of all his retainers, and worn by himself also. During the life time of his father, John the Constant, the friend of Luther, he was attending a diet as his representative, when an archbishop observed to him, "Those letters V.D.M.I.A.E. which I see on your clothes, and those of your servants, signify I suppose, Verbum Dei manet *im aermel*," (*i. e.* the word of God abideth *in the sleeve*) alluding to the lawn sleeves of his own order. "No," replied the prince promptly, "they mean Verbum *diaboli* manet in *archi-episcopis*," the word of the Devil abideth in archbishops.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE EMPEROR AND THE PRECIPICE—ZIPS OF ZIRL—THE LITTLE MAID OF ZIRL—UGLY HEAD DRESS—IMST—MYSTERIOUS LOCK—THE HOSTESS—THE NIGHT—CIVILITIES AT IMST—WARREN'S PAPER MILLS—LANDEK—WISSBERG—TRISAMA ROSANNA—STANZERTHAL—HEINRICH THE FOUNDLING AND HIS WORKS—ARLBERG PASS.

I WAS not at all sorry to leave Innspruck and the Sirocco which made the city like a cauldron, and I hailed the fresh air in the mountains with extreme pleasure as we wound along the banks of the Inn, towards the high precipices of the Martinswand, which divides the valley into Upper and Lower.

The Emperor Maximilian is the great legendary hero of this part of the Tyrol, and amongst many tales told of him is one which belongs to a spot, which, thanks to Murray's correct indication, I did not pass unnoticed, although, without warning, this may easily be done in a carriage, as the object of interest is placed too far above the road to be discerned without seeking for it.

I got out and strained my eyes to discover in the face of a beetling precipice, a hollow cave, in which a crucifix is now placed: this I imagined to be

quite small, as the immense height of the rock deceives the eye, but in fact, it is no less than eighteen feet high. Here it was that the great Emperor, who was certainly as heedless and wild as he was daring and brave, once hung suspended by the heels over the tremendous precipice below, having, when in pursuit of a chamois, missed his footing and stumbled to this terrific spot.

He was seen from beneath in this perilous position, but there was no means of helping him, and his friends could only recommend his soul to mercy conceiving his body devoted to destruction. Maximilian continued to hold on with the desperate strength of despair, but his powers were just on the point of failing when a *halloo* near him restored his courage, and in another moment a friendly grasp dragged him over the rugged rocks to level ground.

He owed his delivery to the presence of mind of a hunter named Zips, a native of Zirl, whose character was more remarkable for intrepidity than probity, and who had been, in fact, compelled to choose a mountain home rather than pine in "captive thrall," for he was a fearless poacher and a chaser of the king's deer. Maximilian, however, was not too particular in his inquiries as to the former conduct of his preserver, and, it is said, was profuse in his rewards to the bold outlaw, on whom he bestowed the title of Count *Hollauer* von Hohenfelsen. It was a happy day for Zips of Zirl, when he found an emperor dangling over a precipice

seven hundred and fifty feet perpendicular, above the foaming Inn, and a joyful sound to the magnificent Maximilian when he heard the holloa, and felt the grip of the hunter of the Martinswand.

The morning was fresh and bright, and the smell of the pine-woods pleasant, as we penetrated their thick retreats. The Inn is here broad and flowing, and the meadows on its banks are filled with high forked poles, used for drying the corn and hay, which the moisture of the ground renders difficult in these valleys. The gigantic rock of Martinswand frowns long over the valley, until new and imposing mountains raise their colossal heads and peer gloomily over the high hills in front, making them appear insignificant by their superior grandeur. Solitary villages start up, with their awkward-shaped church-towers, so remarkable throughout the Tyrol, but placed in picturesque positions which give them a certain beauty; and as we stopped to change horses at several of these, the innocent faces of the simple-looking children struck me as forming a remarkable contrast to the ruggedness of the scenes in which they live and move. One charming little curly-headed girl, of about five years old, seemed fascinated by the appearance of strangers in her village, and stood as if rooted to the spot all the time the huge animals, who were to carry us on, were being introduced to our vehicle. Their enormous hoofs, close to her delicate little naked feet, caused her no alarm; she kept her ground, still

gazing fixedly at us, with a pretty, animated smile of inquiry; and there I still saw her, on looking back, after we had clattered away on a road that appeared to lie through the perpendicular rock which rose straight up, like a wall before us. This interesting little half-dressed creature wore, over her curls, one of those savage caps with which the females of the Tyrol disfigure themselves; it is of huge dimensions, and made of what seems to be fur, but is, in fact, of shaggy woollen material. It is generally purple, spotted with white, and makes the head of the wearer look of a disproportionate size. I met, soon after, a boy driving goats, whose head-dress was far more elegant; for it was adorned with flowers, of a high conical shape, bound with a gold cord.

We passed, on the road, the enormous and very magnificent Kloster of Stamps, which occupies a large space in the flat valley, and has a most imposing effect. Maximilian's second wife, Bianca Maria Sforza, is buried here, and it was always a convent of great importance. The present building, however, appears, externally, perfectly modern, without beauty of architecture. It has numerous towers, with shining balloon-shaped tops, the favourite style in these valleys, and peculiarly ungraceful.

At Silz we rested at a comfortable clean inn, and then resumed our journey, the heat continuing in the valleys very great, while on the high hills the air, from the snows, was more chilly than fresh.

The mountains are here very lofty and wild, but always of the same character. For three hours we wound along a fine road beneath the gigantic peaks of the Wildehaus, and along the charming Oetzthal, till we reached Imst, just as the lowering clouds, which had been long gathering amongst the thick heights, threatened to burst in rain. We entered a very large inn, which gave evidence of having once been a mansion of great importance, and the size of which makes it capable of accommodating a whole host of travellers, should they come wandering along these interminable vales.

Having watched the sky for a time, uncertain whether it would be safe to proceed, as the passes in our onward way were still higher than those we had already surmounted, our indecision was ended by a sudden furious burst of thunder, which came roaring down the valley as if a hundred wolves were in pursuit, and we therefore made up our minds to remain for the night at this secluded spot in the very heart of the mountains.

Imst is finely situated in the wildest of all possible positions, between several valleys, and hemmed round by meeting heights, some covered with snow, and some wooded to the highest point.

The gigantic inn, formerly called Springestein, which stands across the path amidst different roads, is remarkably picturesque from the curious tourelles which adorn its corners, and run up the whole height of the house. Much of it has been

re-constructed since a tremendous fire, which burnt down the greatest part of the village not long since. The inn is very good, and the people extremely civil, so that it is by no means a bad place for an explorer to fix his head quarters in for a summer, and from thence start for the different Thals which are full of interest, and require time and courage to become acquainted with.

I never beheld anything so mysteriously complicated as the locks of the doors to the rooms we occupied, and in vain did I endeavour to put one to its intended purpose. Ingenuity seemed to have been taxed to the utmost to produce a machine which rendered the simple process of locking and unlocking a door almost impossible. Nearly a yard long, with screws, and bars, and plates, and snaps, and handles, this wondrous engine half covered the door, and had a most formidable appearance: when the key was turned, half a dozen little iron spirits started forward, and grasped the bars which crossed, and the wires which curled in the heart of the mystery, the whole sending forth a startling sound of snapping and clasping, quite terrifying to the imprisoned denisen of the apartment so guarded.

Our hostess seemed very proud of her locks, which she alone was able to manage, for, on our return from a walk, the key of the sitting room having been found, after some search, no hand but her's was able to unclose the barrier, though several laughing, noisy maids volunteered their aid to help our necessity.

We remained all the next day, which was Sunday, in this valley, attended at our inn by an amusing party of damsels, who generally came into the room to bring any thing asked for, by twos and threes, and had always plenty to say, and a variety of information to give.

Half our time was occupied in opening and shutting the ranges of windows in our sitting room, in which one huge bow boasted of five, and four others opened to the views on two sides of the immense saloon. As it was extremely sultry, we set them all open whenever the gusts of storm would allow, and had, with the aid of our ready ministers, to keep shutting them quickly every time a hurricane of hail and wind came on, ushered by vivid lightning flashes, and long peals of echoing thunder.

All night long the worthy inhabitants of this town of an hotel did nothing but carouse and make rejoicings, some singing to the guitar, some to the flute, others intoning a chorus, which was still renewed as it came to an end. So that this melody, together with the bright moonlight which told me that

> " . . . . to sleep,
> Was wronging such a night,"

and which streamed into my uncurtained room, succeeded by a rich glowing sun-rise, made anything approaching to repose impossible, a circumstance by no means uncommon in these mountain

regions, where people appear entirely independent of sleep during the summer.

When we left the hotel at early morning, just as the sun was appearing, our hostess and her damsels made their appearance with a bouquet for the ladies, which was presented amidst kissing of hands, and expressions of friendship. In return for this it was expected we should write in the Fremdenbuch our approbation of the entertainment we had met with at the hotel. My companion, however, having been kept awake by the over-night's hilarity at Imst did not feel favourably inclined, I was therefore obliged to linger behind, and write my own impressions of the goodness of the inn, and the amiable intentions of its owners.

I was then conducted to the carriage, as if in triumph, for two of the maids insisted on supporting me by the arms down the dark steep stairs, almost carrying me two flights: and at length we drove off amidst greetings and good wishes, which seemed endless.

I was surprised to hear that in this secluded retreat English enterprise had established a large paper mill, and here a person named Warren had, for several years, employed numerous labourers. The mill was now, however, given up for some reason, and the occupation at an end. The English seem particularly popular at Imst, and the departure of several families connected with this commerce was much regretted.

Daybreak threw a thin lilac veil over the mountains, through which the rocks pierced like pinnacles of ruddy gold, the snowy heights were all tinged with a soft rose colour, and the distant sky was of a deep dark purple. These effects of the skies are wonderfully striking and beautiful throughout this region, and greatly relieve the somewhat monotonous scenery, though fine, by the variety of tints which they throw over the landscape. As usual our way was by the side of a roaring, foaming mountain torrent, which at times spread out into lake-like proportions, shewing what mischief it could do if provoked. The bed of the Inn here is chalky, and its turbid waters were more than usually disturbed by the recent storms. Nothing could be more wildly romantic than this part of our route between Imst and Landek, all of which is the scene of the Tyrolese struggles for liberty, at various periods of their history. Occasional feudal castles rise towering on heights and look down on the valleys. The castle of Kronburg stands proudly on its green hill, a picturesque ruin of great beauty.

We arrived at Landek in about four hours. It is a curious secluded mountain village in the midst of rocks and precipices, with the remains of a fine castle overhanging the river, the venerable beauty of which is spoilt from its having been turned into a dwelling house for some functionary, and it now presents the usual appearance of almost all the Tyrol castles, with ugly roofs and walls squeezed in amongst the antique turrets.

From Landek several roads branch off leading into Switzerland and Italy; that most magnificent of all, leading to the grand pass of the Stelvio, may be followed from Landek by the Ober-Innthal. The river is crossed here by a fine bridge for carriages, and by a foot bridge exceedingly picturesque, beneath the rocks at the foot of the castle. I stood on the centre of this bridge for some time, watching the gambols of the angry river, which foamed and thundered below, threatening to overwhelm the little fragile cottages on its margin, which seem to rock with the force of its dashing waves against them. Huge mountains rise all round, and the first glacier I had seen was gleaming before me blue and transparent—a river in the air in a bed of glittering snow.

The costume of the women here is extremely odd and ugly; every head being enveloped by the hideous shaggy woollen cap, black or purple, enlivened with white specks, which I at first thought was made of the skin of a bear in its original roughness. Some of these are round like a turban, and some pyramidal, all are equally frightful and disfiguring, and the clumsy figures they crown do not set them off.

Not far from Landek, amongst pine covered mountains, rises the fine castle of Wissberg, which has still a grand effect, though modernized. Its position is glorious, for it stands on an isolated rock at the entrance of a deep gorge, before it are huge heights crowned with dark pines, and behind towers a moun-

tain covered with snow; two of its antique towers are connected by a bridge which spans a tremendous ravine, down which a dashing cataract rushes in foamy haste and falls into the rapid river beneath. Pines climb high up the rocks and blacken the face of the cliff which it crowns, and the wreaths of crimson roses and the bowers of elder which lined the sides of the road opposite, presented a singular contrast to the eye.

The beautiful torrents of the Trisanna and the Rosanna swell the Inn in this fine valley, which is here called the Stanzerthal.

At St. Anthon we began the ascent of the Arlberg, or Eagle's Mount, a high pass, covered with snow in winter, but where we encountered but little, and no difficulties of any kind. Nevertheless, it was formerly a journey of great danger to cross this formidable mountain, at the time when fine roads were undreamt of. Many were the travellers lost in the overwhelming snows of these desolate regions, before a benevolent spirit came to their rescue. The following simple account of the first foundation of a hospital for the relief of distressed travellers is very interesting and affecting, as related by the founder himself.

"I, Heinrich Fündelkind, (foundling). My father, he who found me, was the Mayor of Kempten, and was ruined by surety-ship.

"He had nine children, of whom I, Heinrich Fündelkind, was the tenth.

"Then he proposed to us to go to service.

"Then I, Heinrich Fündelkind was hired by Jaklein Ober Rein to herd cattle, and the first year they gave me two *gulden*. Then did I live with this Jaklein ten years; and there did I go with him to church in the winter, and carried his sword. And there were brought in the bodies of many people who had perished in the snow on the Arlberg, whose eyes and throats the birds had eaten. And that moved me, Heinrich Fündelkind, so deeply, that as I had earned fifteen *gulden*, there did I cry out and spoke thus, 'Would anybody take my fifteen gulden and make a beginning on the Arlberg to try to save people from being lost in the snow!'

"That would nobody do.

"And then did I take Almighty God for my helper, and the dear lord Saint Christopher, who is a great help in time of need, and I began, with the fifteen gulden that I had earned with the shepherd's crook in the service of Jaklein Ober Rein; and there the very first winter did I save seven men's lives with these blessed alms. Since this oftentimes have good and honourable men helped me, and I have saved fifty people's lives. And this beginning did I make Anno Dei 1386, on the day of John the Baptist."

This excellent simple-hearted herdsman made pilgrimages throughout Europe to collect contributions for this undertaking, and was fortunate in obtaining the sanction of several powerful princes and noblemen of the country.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"Upon the mountain's heathery slope
The day's last splendours shine,
And rich with many a radiant hue
Gleam gaily on the Rhine.

Southey.

DALAAS—HOUSES—FENCES—THE ILL—THE RHINE—RAGATZ—PFEFFERS — ANCIENT DESCENT — CAVERN GALLERY — THE SPRING—RETURN— THE ESTABLISHMENT.

The change is very striking from these heights of the Arlberg to the smiling fertile vale below, and at the pretty village of Dalaas we were so charmed with the contrast that we resolved to make the neat little inn our quarters for the night. The painted tawdry houses of the Tyrol here give place to Swiss cottages of wood, so carefully constructed that they have a toy-like effect, with their pine-wood beams and the delicate scales of rich orange brown which encrust the whole front of the buildings.

Everything at Dalaas is perfectly Arcadian; one asks where *the poor* can be, for all seems so neat, clean, and comfortable that no idea of poverty is suggested to the mind. A clear rushing stream turns several corn-mills to which neat country girls were taking their corn to be ground; children and good-natured lively-looking old women were driving their familiar and amenable cows home, whose tink-

ling bells made pleasant music as they went, and all appeared to me to realize an image of the golden age, and I was ready to exclaim,

"Pastorelle, quanto siete felice!"

This beauty continues to increase as the orchards and gardens of Switzerland are approached, though the intrusive finery of the Tyrol is not altogether discontinued, and the church-yards are crowded with gilded and painted crosses, nor have the houses got rid of whitewash and glaring fresco painting. By degrees, however, they fade away, and the wooden cottages predominate in the cheerful valley of Alfenz or Klosterthal. The fences of the luxuriant fields are here even more elaborate than in the Tyrol, much art and ingenuity being employed in their construction, and groups of fine trees wave amidst the corn, hemp, and flax fields in all directions.

We observed that the red and yellow of Austria had yielded to the crimson and white of Leichenstein, in this part of the route, and not only the postillion's colours spoke of another sway, but every peasant had a red handkerchief or cap.

After crossing the rapid river Ill by a covered wooden bridge, wide pastures, dotted with wooden huts for cattle, make the country cheerful, and by degrees, the jagged grey rocks of Tyrol sink in the distance, leaving cultivation and brightness before, and a range on the verge of sight of purple mountains, which tell of the future glories of Swiss scenery. A few Swiss dresses begin to appear, all

fluttering with coloured ribbons and gay with velvet; and at Feldkirche I saw the first transparent black fly-cap, which towers over the head of the females of the country.

We entered the valley where the infant Rhine first bursts like a giant babe to light, murmuring along the wide stony bed prepared for its sure and impetuous growth; already a few of the frowning castles, which distinguish the exulting and abounding river from all others, appear above its precipitous banks, and again the country becomes wild and desolate.

We were surprised when we found ourselves on the borders of the Rhine at Trübbach, to see no indication of a boat to carry us over, but when the postillion quietly directed his horses towards the heaps of white stones before us, and caused them to ford the shallow stream which trickled amongst them, we began to imagine that the stupendous river was to be crossed almost dryshod; after some minutes, however, we reached the middle of the bed, and there we became aware of the strength of the main current, which, deep and broad, ran rapidly along beyond the belt of stones we had passed. A boat was ready to ferry horses and carriage across, and we soon landed on the opposite shore. Nothing can be wilder and more savage than this spot; the enormous mass of Falkiss rises boldly into the sky, as if guarding the young and vigorous waters destined to mighty deeds hereafter, and numerous lower

rocks, pointed and rugged, lift up their axes and spears by the side of their chief. At length the road turns off, and, for a time, leaves the river in his cradle of sedges, and advances towards the mysterious region of Ragatz, for we had diverged a little from our way, to visit from hence the far-famed baths of Pfeffers.

The position of Ragatz itself is very imposing: the small town stands on an open space surrounded by a wall of high saw-edged perpendicular rocks, with the furious, foaming Tamina leaping and boiling down a steep ravine, and rushing into the plain beyond; a picturesque ruined castle crowns a neighbouring height, and a large new inn, supplied with water from the hot spring at several miles distance, occupies a conspicuous place in the vale, and promises ample accommodation for travellers. A few minutes' walk from this building begins the singular road through the gorge of the Tamina. The bridge is passed under which the torrent rushes after falling over numerous rocky impediments, and the way to the baths appears.

We had hired a small carriage drawn by a mule, to convey us to the scene, but the walk is equally, if not more, agreeable, for those whose time is not precious, and whose strength is equal to the exertion. A cleft of steep rocks is entered at once, and the road lies along a naturally projecting ledge, now considerably assisted by art, beneath overhanging cliffs on one side, and a sheer precipice on



Madeley lithe 3 Wellington St Strand

RAGATZ IN THE VALLEY OF THE RHINE.

London, John Olhvier, 59 Pall Mall.

the other, of five hundred feet in height, while, between, and but a few yards below the path, the stream which comes rushing from the distant gulf hurries madly on, as if terrified at the din and commotion it has itself created in its course.

I could not at first help feeling somewhat nervous as the wheels of the carriage passed within half an inch of the precipice where, as there is no real danger, it is thought unnecessary to protect the road by a parapet; this, however, does not long occur, and at intervals great precautions are taken to render all secure, a stone wall here and there having been erected, and trunks of trees laid down to form a border to the path. By the *debris* which strew some parts of the way, it is evident that repairs are frequently necessary to keep it in order, but at present nothing can be safer. An arch is cut through the rock about half-way to allow carriages to pass, and the toppling crags peer over each other, casting deep shades across the wild ravine, along which the patient mule unconsciously hurries.

Open circular spaces occur occasionally where meeting carriages may turn, but it appears as if drivers had a particular pleasure in frightening their victims, for they invariably contrive to meet in a narrow part, and insist on passing each other, where danger, by such means alone, can be created.

Picturesque masses of rock sometimes intrude on

the path between the traveller and the torrent, but, in general, there is nothing to impede the full view of the white cataract beneath. A scanty growth of fir-trees climbs the steep, and a few shrubs nod over from the summit, and wave a greeting to the adventurer.

A neat wood-house stands about half-way, beyond which the road mounts zigzag, till the door of the bath-house stops all further advance.

On arriving here, the first feeling is disappointment that the great adventure of Pfeffers is accomplished with so much ease, but, in fact, except the incident of the precipice road, it is only beginning.

The enormous establishment offers its long galleries and vaulted corridors to the stranger's surprise, who sees here one of the finest buildings devoted to health that he can behold. Boarders, of all ranks, can be accommodated within these walls to the number of three hundred. In former days it was under monastic superintendence, but now government has the arrangement of all the concerns of the baths, and all regulations are made by authority. The poor, as well as the rich, are here made comfortable and cheerful, and may enjoy the benefit of the healing spring, which was, in days of yore, thought so salutary that patients did not hesitate to trust themselves to a rope and a wooden seat, that they might be lowered from the height above along the perpendicular face of the precipice

into the abyss, where the boiling waters of the Tamina guard the sacred well in the secret recesses of the cave.

The spot is shewn where patients descended in this perilous way, but now all is a '*chemin de velours*,' and the savage nature of the spot alone can inspire terror. It is impossible, however, not to shudder at the reflection of such daring, and to shrink from the thought that so many feeble beings, desperately seeking relief, should trust their lives to the chance of a rope's strength.

We descended a long flight of stairs from the upper rooms of the bath-house, and found ourselves in a large, handsome pump-room, where the waters may be drunk by those who are content to receive it through the pipes which convey it from the fountain-head, in the distant cavern.

We were now on the brink of the torrent which we had long seen boiling far below our road, and we crossed it, over a solid bridge of planks, securely provided with rails, for it is on the opposite side of the ravine that the pathway is conducted along the face of the cliff. This path is a projecting gallery of wood, firmly secured with strong railing and numerous supports, and which hangs midway between the roaring torrent and the vault of the cavern, whose length is two thousand feet, and the height of the closing rocks about seven hundred.

After entering a low wooden door, which is kept locked, I found myself fairly entered into this

extraordinary retreat, and, for a few moments, was almost overpowered by the singularity of the situation. All seemed darkness and confusion: a thundering voice shook the huge cavern to its extremity, and a thousand yelling, roaring answers appeared sent up from every cell and hollow. By degrees the darkness was, to some extent, dispelled, and as I advanced I could see the wild waves far below me galloping like enraged wolves down the rocky abyss, leaping over huge masses of stone, and roaring fearfully as they surmounted every obstacle, while the caverns re-echoed to the stunning din they caused.

The path doubles and zigzags with the torrent, and the rocks are sometimes closed overhead, and sometimes leave clefts through which glimpses of blue sky and sun and waving trees and emerald turf are seen at an enormous height above. It is, however, a giddy task to look up at these openings, whence reviving gleams are sent down, gilding the moist projections of the caves, and glittering on the white marble-like stone which divides the rock with grey slate deepened into black in many parts from the dripping of the water from above.

At about a third of the way a huge circular cavern opens out, and here, across the dark ravine, a strong bridge of planks is thrown, that the adventurous may cross to the other side. I stood at the edge for some time, endeavouring to summon courage to follow my companion, but as I looked

on the tremendous gulf, the dark rocky wall, the terrific vaulted overhanging roof, and heard the confusing howls, and the hissing and thundering defiance of the imprisoned and struggling waters, I had no power to move or to dare the fury of the spirits of the place by stepping over their abyss, and braving them in one of their cells of terror.

Continuing to ascend gently, the path suddenly stops before a bridge thrown over to a projecting platform of rock, where, in a low cave, closed by a door, which is kept locked, boils the hot spring which concealed itself for ages, in vain, in a spot almost inaccessible.

When the mouth of this cave is opened, forth issues a stream of hot air, such as might proceed from the jaws of the devastating dragon who, no doubt, was believed, in the golden age of romance, to inhabit this retreat and to sally forth occasionally on his destructive errands. A spirit of benevolence, however, displaced "the horrid creature," and the sulphureous smell is no longer caused by the dragon's breath, but it is a sign that guides to health and renovated life.

Beyond this spot the mighty cavern raises a barrier of rocks which forbid further progress; for not even a slight ledge, such as has been hitherto taken advantage of for the gallery, now appears; all is even and perpendicular, dark and threatening, and the black stream comes furiously down between the dismal rocks, making a violent leap up as it

issues forth, and plunging into the depths beneath. Above, a wide fissure shews the sky, and, the light descending points out the cavern of the spring shining amidst the universal gloom.

On returning, the eye having become accustomed to the darkness, every object is distinctly visible, and the real size of this remarkable cavern appears with all its grandeur of form and the terrors of its recesses. In some parts the ruggedness of the roof and the rents which shew the sky tell histories of displaced rocks, which, in the course of time, have been driven in perhaps by the violence of storms, and having detached themselves from the great mass, have fallen headlong into the bed of the torrent which foams beneath, opposing fresh barriers to its headlong course and thus increasing the din of its impatient murmuring.

Pipes are conducted along the same gallery which leads to the spring, and by these the water is sent to the baths, but those who drink it, in many cases, come to the fountain head and have it drawn pure from its source, as its virtue must necessarily be weakened by the long course it has to take before it reaches the establishment.

There seems everything in the arrangement of the baths to make them agreeable and convenient—handsome dining rooms and saloons and private chambers, pleasant terrace walks and bowers, and flowery paths conducting to the heights, whence fine views and delightful strolls may be had for the

seeking. There is a perfect bazaar within the house, where every sort of necessary can be obtained, and French millinery, Scotch thread gloves and stockings, Swiss toys and Italian jewellery can be bought.

Amongst the inmates we found an English lady who had been at Pfeffers during the season and generally returned every year. We heard the society was cheerful, and I doubt not that a sojourn at these baths of the cavern must offer many attractions not to be found in less novel situations.

We slept at Ragatz, and on the following day proceeded on our way to Lake Wallenstadt, where I began my acquaintance with that most exciting of all regions—romantic Switzerland.

THE END.

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Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 20 February, 2016